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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Polls for 4 RS, 7 MLC seats in K'taka on 18 June

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

The notification for elections to four Rajya Sabha seats from Karnataka and seven Legislative Council seats in the state was issued on Monday, with voting scheduled for 18 June.

Members of the Assembly will vote in these elections at the Vidhana Soudha.

The Rajya Sabha polls are being held as the terms of Iranna Kadadi and Narayana Koragappa (both BJP), Mallikarjun Kharge of the Congress, and former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda of the JD(S) are set to end on 25 June.

The Council elections are being conducted as the terms of seven MLCs elected by MLAs are due to expire on 30 June.

The last date for filing nominations is 8 June.

The last date for the withdrawal of candidatures is 11 June. Counting will take place on 18 June.

The Congress is expected to win three of the four RS seats and five of the seven MLC seats. *—PTI*

Annamalai likely to quit BJP, float own party

CHENNAI, 1 JUNE

Former Tamil Nadu BJP Chief K Annamalai is reportedly likely to quit the party after a meeting with BJP National General Secretary Nitin Nabin later on Monday. Sources said Annamalai feels there is "no opportunity and future" for him in the party. He had reportedly been offered a Rajya Sabha seat, which he is said to have declined. The development comes nearly a month after the Tamil Nadu Assembly polls in which the BJP won just one seat in the 234-member House. Speaking to reporters at Chennai airport before leaving for Delhi, Annamalai said, "Please wait. We will sit down and talk in two days." Notably, the vehicle he arrived in reportedly did not display a BJP flag. *—SALAR NEWS*

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Env Minister rejects Cong's allegations over Nicobar project

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav has rejected Congress leader Jairam Ramesh's allegations that environmental clearances for the Great Nicobar Island (GNI) project were based on "inadequate" baseline studies.

In a letter dated May 27, Yadav said the project had undergone detailed appraisal through shoreline assessments, marine investigations and modelling exercises by reputed institutions, including ZSI, BSI, SACON and WII, which have long-term ecological data on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

He said although primary data was collected over one seasonal cycle, it was combined with historical datasets to ensure a scientifically robust environmental impact assessment and management plan.

Ramesh had alleged that baseline studies were conducted over only a few weeks and sought comprehensive cumulative impact assessments, citing erosion concerns at Galathea Bay. Yadav said the eastern flank of the bay is "predominantly stable" and did not require three-season studies. He refused disclosure of an NGT High-Powered Committee report, citing strategic and defence sensitivity under the RTI Act. *—PTI*

Comm LPG prices up by Rs 42; ATF for int'l flights cut 27%

19kg cylinder now priced at record ₹3,113.5; domestic flight ATF remains unchanged

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Bengaluru's commercial LPG price now stands at Rs 3,198 after a Rs 46 hike *—ANI*

Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices for domestic airlines remained unchanged for a second consecutive month on Monday, while international carrier rates were reduced by 27 per cent in line with easing global benchmarks. At the same time, state-run oil marketing companies increased commercial LPG and 5-kg free-trade cylinder prices.

ATF for domestic airlines continues at Rs 1,04,927.18 per kilolitre, unchanged since April. However, international airlines will benefit from a sharp cut of over USD 400 per kilolitre, with ATF reduced to about USD 1,100 per kl from USD 1,511.86 per kl in May. Prices for overseas carriers had earlier surged to USD 1,435.31 per kl in April amid Iran war.

State-owned fuel retailers also raised commercial LPG prices by Rs 42 per 19kg cylinder, taking the Delhi rate to a record Rs 3,113.50 from Rs 3,071.50. Bengaluru's commercial LPG price now stands at Rs 3,198 after a Rs 46 hike. Prices of 5kg free-trade cylinders were also increased by Rs 11 to Rs 821.50.

The price movement follows a series of sharp increases in recent months, with commercial LPG seeing a steep Rs 993 hike in May and Rs 202 jump in April.

Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas Sujata Sharma said state-run firms were currently incurring losses of about Rs 30 per litre (Rs 30,000 per kilolitre) on ATF supplied to domestic airlines.

Petrol and diesel prices remained unchanged after a previous increase of about Rs 7.50 per litre last month, with rates in Delhi at Rs 102.12 and Rs 95.20 respectively.

The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), representing Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet, has warned that the sector is under "extreme stress" and urged relief ahead of the next pricing cycle. *—Salar News*

Rescuers work at the site of an Israeli airstrike that struck a building and damaged a hospital in Lebanese port city of Tyre on Monday; Iran said it would not reach a deal with the US until Israel halts its attacks on Lebanon *—PTI*

US bombs Iranian military sites, Kuwait hit by drones

DUBAI, 1 JUNE

The United States said on Monday that it bombed radar and drone sites in Iran after Tehran shot down an American drone over the weekend, further escalating tensions in the ongoing conflict.

Iran, in turn, claimed it launched retaliatory strikes, while Kuwait reported incoming fire and activated its air defences to intercept drones and missiles early on Monday.

The US Central Command said it carried out "measured and deliberate strikes" in Iran over Saturday and Sunday near Geruk and on Qeshm Island. It said the action was in response to "aggressive Iranian actions", including the downing of a US MQ-1 drone operating over international waters.

CENTCOM said US fighter aircraft destroyed Iranian air defence systems, a ground control station and two one-way attack drones it described as threats to shipping in regional waters.

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard said it responded to an American attack, likely referring to incidents near Kuwait, and alleged US forces had targeted a telecommunications tower. Kuwait said its defences engaged incoming aerial threats, with US Army Central headquartered in the country. *—PTI*

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IRAN SUSPENDS PEACE TALKS

Meanwhile, Iran's Tasnim news agency reported that Tehran's negotiating team has suspended indirect talks with the United States via mediators amid continued attacks on Lebanon. Iran continues to maintain pressure on the Strait of Hormuz, disrupting global energy supplies and driving up fuel prices.

'Doctors' outfit not allowed to depose before panel over NEET leak'

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Amid the ongoing controversy over NEET and CUET-UG 2026, Representatives of the United Doctors Front were reportedly not allowed to make a presentation before a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Monday after objections from ruling party members, sources said.

The meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports was held to examine the pros and cons of pen-and-paper examinations versus computer-based tests (CBT) for national entrance exams.

Sources said senior officials of the National Testing Agency (NTA), including Director General Abhishek Singh, told the panel that their immediate focus was conducting the NEET-UG re-test on 21 June in pen-and-paper format in a secure manner.

Committee members also questioned risks of hacking in CBT exams. NTA said a committee has been formed to examine the issue, with a report expected in three months.

Sources said that the committee had invited the United Doctors Front, which has approached the Supreme Court alleging systemic failures in the examination process, but their presentation was disallowed after objections from BJP members. The group has demanded restructuring of the NTA. *—PTI*

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DKS, Siddaramaiah in Delhi for cabinet talks

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Karnataka chief minister-designate DK Shivakumar and senior leader Siddaramaiah arrived here on Monday to hold consultations with the high command over the composition of the new state cabinet, ahead of the 3 June 3 swearing-in.

Shivakumar, who replaces Siddaramaiah as leader of Congress Legislature Party in Karnataka, is scheduled to be sworn in as the chief minister with some members of his council on Wednesday.

Shivakumar, who checked into Karnataka Bhawan here, told reporters, "We have to decide ministers." Siddaramaiah is staying at a hotel. With the council of ministers capped at 34, including the CM, and a pool of aspirants vying for limited berths, Shivakumar faces one of his first tests as CM-designate. Party sources acknowledged the risk of disgruntlement among those who fail to make the cut. *— PTI*

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Zameer denies viral clip backing SDPI man

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

A viral audio of Congress leader BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan has triggered a controversy in which he is purportedly heard asking Muslim voters to support the SDPI candidate instead of Congress nominee in the Davanagere South bypoll. **However, he said the audio clip is fake and AI-made.**

The clip, linked to the bypoll held on 9 April, surfaced at a politically sensitive time in State, with discussions underway over Cabinet formation ahead of Chief Minister-designate DK Shivakumar's swearing-in on Wednesday.

It allegedly features a conversation between Khan and Mohammed Siraj, expelled vice-president of the minority wing of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, in which instructions are given to reduce Congress' vote share in select areas and divert Muslim voters to SDPI candidate Afsar Kodlipete.The audio was first circulated on Monday via an X account named "kannadacockroacc". The authenticity of the audio has not been verified. *—PTI*

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PM RAISES REFUGEE ISSUE WITH MYANMAR PRESIDENT

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday raised concerns over the impact of Myanmar's armed group activities along India's border areas and discussed the issue of refugees with the President of Myanmar, U Min Aung Hlaing, the Ministry of External Affairs stated.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said Modi addressed concerns about cross-border spillover from Myanmar's internal conflict, while noting that such actions, along with military operations by the Myanmar Army close to the border, have implications for people on the Indian side.

Misri added that Modi urged Myanmar authorities to ensure that operations near the border do not harm civilians living on the Indian side.

Misri acknowledged the influx into Mizoram from Myanmar. "Authorities of both countries are in contact with each other as to how they will be sent back," he said.

Meanwhile, Hlaing assured Modi that Myanmarese territory would not be allowed to use against India's security interests. They agreed to maintain close engagement on matters related to critical minerals and rare earths. Hlaing is on a five-day trip to India, two months after he became the president. The talks focused on trade and economic ties, defence and border management. Myanmar is one of India's neighbours and it shares a 1,640km -long border with a number of northeastern states including militancy-hit Nagaland and Manipur. *—Agencies*

Education Ministry denies fire at its HQ

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Ministry of Education on Monday clarified that a fire reported earlier as having broken out at its office was actually confined to the School of Planning and Architecture building in central Delhi and did not affect the ministry's headquarters.

The clarification came after media reports, citing the Delhi Fire Service, stated that a blaze had erupted at the Ministry of Education office. The fire prompted the deployment of fire tenders, ambulances and police personnel.

Congress expressed concern over the reports, with party leader Jairam Ramesh describing the incident as "very concerning" and "very fishy" in a post on X. The Aam Aadmi Party also raised questions over the fire and hinted at a possible link to the ongoing CBSE-NEET controversy. *— PTI*

FOOTBALL FANS RELIEVED

'Z' strikes last minute deal with FIFA to broadcast World Cup in India

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be broadcast live in India as Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the sport's world governing body, and the 'Z' group on Monday reached an agreement just 10 days before the start of the competition on 11 June.

The World Cup, to be co-hosted by the USA, Canada and Mexico, will be broadcast live on television by Zee Entertainment through their newly launched Unite8 Sports network, while live streaming will be available on Zee 5 app.

Under the partnership, 'Z' will deliver coverage of 39 FIFA events until 2034, spanning men's, women's and youth competitions, including the 2030 World Cup to be co-hosted by Morocco, Portugal, and Spain.

"Football cuts across regions and demographics, and the investments in garnering the media rights and launching dedicated sports channels reflect our clear belief in its long-term potential," Zee Entertainment Enterprises CEO Punit Goenka said. Shares of ZEEL ended nearly 3 per cent higher. The stock edged higher by 2.67 per cent to settle at Rs 95.75 on the BSE. *—PTI*

B'LURU MAN PROTESTS TRAFFIC HALT FOR GUV AS PREGNANT WIFE WAITS

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

A man staged a sit-in protest on Old Airport Road on Monday, alleging he was stuck in traffic due to VIP blockade for Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's convoy while travelling with his pregnant wife.

The man stepped out of his vehicle and sat in the middle of the road, drawing the attention of traffic police stationed at the spot. Videos of the incident showed an officer repeatedly asking him to move and warning of action if he refused.

The commuter questioned the traffic restrictions, saying his wife was pregnant and the delay was causing distress. "The Governor hasn't even come out of the airport yet, but you've stopped us here," he was heard saying. He also asked, "Is only the Governor a VIP? Are we nobody?"

Police personnel attempted to pacify him, assuring him that he was important and urging him to clear the road. However, he insisted that traffic should not be halted unnecessarily for VIP movement. The stand-off lasted a few minutes before officers called for a patrol vehicle,

after which the man ended his protest, returned to his car and cleared the road. He also reportedly claimed that his pregnant wife required urgent medical attention. A senior traffic police officer said an inquiry has been initiated. *—PTI*

Viral audio clip fake, says Zameer Ahmed Khan

Clip fabricated using AI to create confusion: Zameer

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

Senior Congress leader BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan on Monday dismissed a purported audio clip linked to the Davanagere South Assembly bypoll as "fake", alleging it was part of a "political conspiracy" generated using AI technology.

Khan said the clip being circulated by some media outlets was fabricated to create confusion and insisted he did not speak in the manner attributed to him. He also said a complaint would be filed with the cyber police against those responsible for creating and circulating the audio and challenged anyone to subject it to any forensic examination.

The controversy emerged amid internal tensions in the Congress following the Davanagere South bypoll, where the party fielded Samarth Shamanur Mallikarjuna, grandson of veteran leader Shamanur Shivashankarappa. The decision came after the high command reportedly rejected demands from a section of Muslim leaders seeking a minority candidate.

A day after the polls, several Muslim Congress leaders — including Legislative Council Chief Whip Saleem Ahmed, MLAs Rizwan Arshad and Yasir Ahmed Khan Pathan, and MLC Bilkis Bano — held a press conference alleging that certain party members from the minority community had worked against the official candidate. However, they did not name anyone.

Following the allegations, the Congress suspended MLC K Abdul Jabbar and relieved MLC Naseer Ahmed of his duties as political secretary to the Chief Minister. Speculation also mounted that Khan could face disciplinary action in a future cabinet reshuffle.

Khan, Jabbar and Naseer Ahmed had all reportedly sought a ticket for a Muslim candidate from Davanagere South and were said to have stayed away from campaigning after the decision.

Despite internal party dissent, Congress candidate Samarth Mallikarjuna won the bypoll, although SDPI candidate Afsar Kodlipete secured 18,975 votes, impacting the winning margin of the Congress candidate. *—PTI*

10 Ministers to take oath first: Congress

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Congress MLA Ashok M Pattan on Monday said that the swearing-in ceremony for Karnataka's new Congress-led government under Chief Minister-designate DK Shivakumar is scheduled for Wednesday at 4pm. Pattan indicated that the cabinet formation is likely to be carried out in two instalments. He said that in the first phase, 10 ministers are expected to take oath.

He said meetings are expected to be held on Monday night and Tuesday to finalise allocation of ministries in Karnataka.

He added that the remaining ministers would likely be announced in the first week of next month, after the Assembly Council and Rajya Sabha elections are completed.

When asked about his own prospects, Pattan said he was hopeful of being included in the first list, describing himself as a senior leader.

On the proposed coordination committee, he said he had no information about it, adding that the High Command would take all decisions regarding coordination and screening committees without consulting MLAs. *—ANI*

Posters of CM-designate DK Shivakumar are seen at Hudson Circle in Bengaluru on Monday *—MOHAMMED ASAD*

DyCM post for Yathindra, and Mahadevappa?

MYSURU, 1 JUNE

Members of Dalit Sangarsha Samithi who support Minister HC Mahadevappa held a protest in Mysuru on Saturday, urging the Congress leadership to appoint him as the Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka.

Protesters raised slogans and carried placards supporting Mahadevappa highlighting his long service to the party and demanding a Dalit representative in the top post.

They wanted justice for Mahadevappa as he didn't get a reward for what he did to protect dalits.

They warned that denying the Dy CM post could politically hurt the Congress and said dalits would teach the party a lesson if it was ignored.

Meanwhile, at another press conference Congress' Chamaraja MLA K Harishgowda demanded the Deputy CM post for Yathindra Siddaramaiah. He urged the high command to make Yathindra district in-charge Minister and Deputy CM.

He said that as Siddaramaiah had resigned, it is important to make Yathindra Deputy CM to consolidate Ahinda votes.

He also urged his party leaders to provide a cabinet berth for Tanveer Sait and to continue Mahadevappa as minister.

Meanwhile, Deputy Speaker Rudrappa Manappa Lamani on Monday expressed hopes of securing a ministerial berth. Congress MLA Shivannavar also expressed hopes of getting a minister post in the new Cabinet. *—SALAR NEWS*

Siddaramaiah left a broken-down lorry type admin: Ashoka

BJP leader R Ashoka and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah *—PTI*

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

Leader of Opposition in the Karnataka Assembly R Ashoka on Monday criticised the outgoing Siddaramaiah government, saying it has left behind an administration like a "broken-down lorry" that the incoming CM-designate D K Shivakumar will now have to repair.

He alleged Shivakumar would be forced to clear pending dues and debts, leading to higher taxes on the public. Ashoka claimed Siddaramaiah resigned under pressure from the Congress high command and Rahul Gandhi, and argued that he had considered himself indispensable as an AHINDA leader representing minorities, backward classes and Dalits.

He also accused the Congress of sidelining backward communities and reiterated claims that the state is financially strained, with no funds for development. He said Karnataka has become a debt-ridden state under Congress rule, contrasting it with surplus budgets under previous BJP governments.

Ashoka further alleged that Siddaramaiah's three-year tenure saw heavy borrowing and declining development spending after implementation of welfare guarantee schemes. He predicted voters would "teach Congress a lesson" in 2028. *—PTI*

7 saved after boat sinks near Uttara Kannada coast

UTTARA KANNADA, 1 JUNE

A fishing boat named 'Shri Navaratna' sank in the deep sea off Uttara Kannada district on Sunday evening, with all seven fishermen onboard rescued. The boat had departed from Belambar village in Ankola taluk and began sinking between Honavar and Kumta while returning. Nearby crew members responded swiftly, rescuing Venkatesh Kharvi, Nagappa Kharvi, Sandeep Kharvi, Vikas Kharvi, Vishlesha Kharvi, Rajat Banavalikar, and Latesh Kharvi. The vessel was lost at sea, causing substantial financial damage, including expensive nets, equipment, and the engine. Preliminary reports suggest hull damage allowed seawater to enter, leading to sinking during fishing operations. *—SALAR NEWS*

Bengaluru public prosecutor caught with Rs 5K bribe

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

A public prosecutor attached to a City court was caught on Monday while allegedly accepting a Rs 5,000 bribe from a complainant. The accused, identified as Savitha Naveen Patil, 55, is posted as a public prosecutor at the City Civil and Sessions Court (CCH-54) in the City. According to Lokayukta officials, Savitha Naveen Patil had allegedly demanded Rs 5,000 from a Banashankari resident for submitting objections in connection with a case registered at the Chennammanakere Achukattu police station. Following a complaint by the resident, Lokayukta officials laid a trap and caught Savitha Naveen Patil while she was allegedly accepting the bribe from the complainant, a senior official said. A case was registered against her under Section 7(a) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, and the accused was arrested, he said. Further investigation by the police is underway, a senior official said *—PTI*

Karnataka govt sets up Quantum Task Force

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

The Karnataka government has constituted a 16-member 'Quantum Task Force' hoping to establish the State as a national hub for quantum technology and innovation, officials said on Monday.

The committee has been formed based on orders issued by the Department of Electronics, Information Technology & Biotechnology with the goal of implementing the outlines and strategies of the 'Karnataka Quantum Roadmap,' which was recently unveiled at the Quantum India Bengaluru Summit, officials said.

"This high-level task force will provide the necessary policy formulation, strategic direction, and institutional guidance to foster quantum technology research, innovation, startup support, and industrial adoption in the state," the department said.

The 16-member committee comprises prominent experts from academic institutions, research centres, the tech industry, and senior government officials.

Professor Arindam Ghosh from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has been appointed Chairman of the task force. He is a JC Bose National Fellow and holds the JRD Tata Chair at the Department of Physics.

The Director of the Department of Science and Technology and Managing Director of Karnataka Science & Technology Promotion Society will serve as the committee secretary.

The committee will be responsible for blueprinting and overseeing the development of key cutting-edge infrastructure in the state, including the mega 'Quantum City in Hesserghatta', which is poised to become the epicentre of India's quantum ecosystem, the department added. *—PTI*

SC asks HC to decide fast on ED-Embassy dispute

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

The Supreme Court has asked the Karnataka HC to expeditiously decide pending petitions involving Embassy East Business Park Pvt Ltd, while declining to interfere with an interim order passed by the HC.

Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice Augustine George Masih passed the order while hearing a Special Leave Petition filed by the ED against an interim order of the HC in proceedings involving Embassy East Business Park Pvt. Ltd. and others.

The Bench noted that the criminal petition and connected matters were already listed before the HC on 5 June.

The Supreme Court accordingly disposed of the petition and requested the High Court to decide all pending petitions as early as possible by August 2026.

The proceedings arise from litigation concerning land allotted by KIADB to Embassy East Business Park in Bengaluru. The matter has also drawn attention in view of disclosures relating to a proposed facility of US semiconductor equipment manufacturer Lam Research on a portion of the land.

According to info available, arrangements have been made for a 25-acre parcel in the project area. Embassy Developments Ltd. had stated that the arrangement with Lam Research is a sub-lease and that no sale of land has taken place.

Corporate filings of Lam Research India and Embassy group entities refer to the sub-lease arrangement and also contemplate the possibility of a future transfer or execution of a sale deed, subject to fulfilment of contractual conditions, regulatory approvals and legal proceedings. *—ANI*

BJP protests withdrawal of cases

KALABURAGI, 1 JUNE

BJP on Monday staged a protest in Kalaburagi against the Karnataka government's decision to withdraw cases related to the 2022 violence at Ladle Mashak Dargah in Aland.

State BJP President and MLA BY Vijayendra, who took part in the protest, demanded that the cases be re-registered and strict legal action be taken against the accused. He also announced statewide protests across all Assembly constituencies, alleging "repeated insults to Hindus" by the Congress government.

Speaking to the media, Vijayendra accused the government of withdrawing cases against those involved in alleged attacks on the Raghava Chaitanya Shivalinga within the disputed Dargah premises. He said the BJP would intensify its agitation and create public awareness on the issue.

Party leaders alleged that the decision reflected "vote-bank appeasement" and accused the government of protecting "anti-social elements". They claimed there was a gap between the Congress's statements and actions, and accused it of weakening law and order by shielding those who allegedly desecrated religious symbols.

TBJP warned that protests would spread across the State if the government failed to act, adding that it would not tolerate "anti-people policies" or attempts to divide communities.

The Karnataka Cabinet last month decided to withdraw seven cases linked to communal violence at the site in March 2022, when BJP workers attempted a purification ritual of a Shivalinga, triggering clashes and prohibitory orders in the area. *—PTI*

Robots, AI to scan BWSSB pipelines for theft, leaks

BENGALURU,1 JUNE

Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) is set to explore the use of AI, predictive analytics, and robotic inspection technologies to detect water theft, reduce leakages, and improve Bengaluru's water distribution network, officials said on Monday.

The scale and scope of this implementation make it a major milestone in India

In a major push towards technology-driven water management, BWSSB has agreed to facilitate a joint pilot study by two start-ups — SmartTerra and Solinas — to identify sources of Unaccounted-for Water and reduce Non-Revenue Water losses in the city.

The year-long study will be implemented at zero cost to BWSSB, with the utility only providing support for essential civil works. SmartTerra will use acoustic sensing technology to pinpoint underground leak locations without extensive excavation. Meanwhile, Solinas will undertake robotic inspection of water pipelines to detect structural defects and hidden leakages, officials said.

The technologies are expected to help BWSSB continuously monitor water distribution patterns, assess demand, detect losses, improve billing efficiency, and strengthen revenue collection mechanisms, officials said. *—PTI*

IT'S BACK TO SCHOOL

Students returned to classrooms across Bengaluru on Monday as schools reopened after the summer holidays *—MOHAMMED ASAD*

2025 STAMPEDE AFTERMATH

RCB celebrations stay joyful, safe

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE

Royal Challengers Bengaluru fans celebrated their team's back-to-back IPL triumph through the night in the "right spirit" after a five-wicket win over Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad, with police ensuring festivities remained peaceful and controlled.

RCB fans adopted memorial gestures for the 11 fans who died in last year's tragedy and opted for controlled, indoor celebrations in line with police guidelines.

Given last year's deadly stampede outside the M Chinnaswamy Stadium that killed 11 people during title celebrations, Bengaluru Police deployed extensive patrols across major city hotspots where fans gathered. Barriers were set up at key junctions to manage crowds, while officers monitored traffic and ensured celebrations did not disrupt public order.

Fans celebrate after RCB won the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2026 title during a live telecast at a club in Bengaluru on Sunday *—PTI*

Police Commissioner Seemanth Kumar said the city remained calm throughout the celebrations, with no major untoward incidents reported. He added that strict instructions were issued to prevent drunken driving and reckless behaviour, and that the police presence was aimed at ensuring fans could celebrate safely.

Supporters gathered in small groups across the City, dancing, waving flags and cheering the team's victory, but authorities said the celebrations remained peaceful. RCB acknowledged the fan support, with star batter Virat Kohli noting the franchise effectively enjoys "14 home games" due to the travelling fanbase.

The franchise has also decided against holding a victory parade in Bengaluru, citing safety concerns. *—PTI*

Fans go on the rampage in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD, 1 JUNE: Celebrations of RCB's second consecutive IPL title turned chaotic in Hyderabad on Sunday night. Large crowds gathered near the Secretariat, KPHB and other areas, bursting firecrackers on roads and disrupting traffic. Videos showed youths climbing barricades, damaging public property and even riding on moving vehicles. Police conducted a lathi charge to disperse the crowds. Cases were registered against 17 individuals under KPHB police limits for alleged public nuisance while intoxicated. Separate footage from Andhra Pradesh showed alleged fans damaging a public bus, drawing online outrage and calls for action using CCTV evidence. *—SALAR NEWS*

Holding IPL final in Ah'bad unjust: DKS

BENGALURU, 1 JUNE: Chief Minister-designate D K Shivakumar on Monday congratulated Royal Challengers Bengaluru for their second consecutive IPL title win, while criticising the decision to shift the final from Bengaluru to Ahmedabad. He said Bengaluru had originally been designated as the host city and called the relocation an "injustice" to the state's youth and cricket fans. Shivakumar alleged that Gujarat "snatched" the opportunity, adding that Karnataka would take steps to prevent such decisions in future. He, however, congratulated the team on behalf of Karnataka, saying RCB had made the state proud despite the venue change. *—PTI*

— PTI

WB govt rolls out free bus travel for women

KOLKATA, 1 JUNE

The West Bengal government has launched free travel for women on all routes of state-run buses. Women commuting during peak hours requested an increase in bus frequency. The move aligns with the BJP's election promise, with a government official confirming the initiative. Mala Biswas, boarding a bus from Ballygunge to Park Street, expressed happiness but emphasised the need for more buses, citing a sharp decrease since Covid-19. The scheme, effective from 1 June, covers West Bengal Transport Corporation, South Bengal, and North Bengal State Transport Corporation buses. The government said it would provide Digital smart cards with photos and names to prevent misuse, aiming to empower women and improve access. —*PTI*

Love above politics: BJP MLC's son to wed Sule's daughter

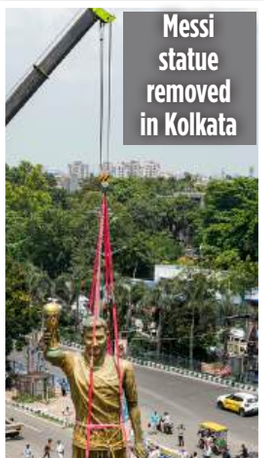
NAGPUR, 1 JUNE

BJP MLC candidate and industrialist Arun Lakhani, whose son is to marry NCP MP Supriya Sule's daughter, stated that politics and family connections are separate. He was nominated for the Maharashtra legislative council elections, drawing political attention. Lakhani acknowledged the family link to the Pawar family but insisted his nomination was unrelated, emphasising his commitment to his party. He highlighted his regional experience and connections, expressing confidence of victory. Opposition leaders, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Sanjay Raut, praised him as a "gentleman," while Congress's Vijay Wadettiwar criticised the BJP's preference for industrialists. Polls for 16 seats are scheduled for 18 June, with voting and counting on 22 June. —*PTI*

Keralam Nehru centres to promote scientific thinking

T'PURAM, 1 JUNE

Keralam's Chief Minister VD Satheesan announced plans to establish Centres of Scientific Temper named after Jawaharlal Nehru. The centres aim to foster scientific thinking among students, reflecting Nehru's emphasis on science and rationality. The government will also create Centres of Excellence, inspired by international institutions, to offer world-class education. Satheesan highlighted Nehru's role in promoting scientific temper and said Keralam would advance that vision through dedicated centres across the state. He stressed the importance of preparing students for rapid technological change, including artificial intelligence. The government seeks to attract international students. —*PTI*



A 70-ft statue of Argentine football star Lionel Messi, which had become unstable following recent storms, was removed in Kolkata on Monday. The project was spearheaded by ex-minister Sujit Bose, who was recently arrested by the ED in a municipal recruitment scam.

India-US trade deal 90% done: Goyal

US agrees to cut tariffs on India to 18 pc from 50 pc; both sides will now finalise the deal

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday said India and the US have finalised most elements of the first phase of the bilateral trade agreement, and negotiations are now focused on a few minor issues like "commas and full stops."

He said the US team is here to hold talks on finalising the first phase of the bilateral trade agreement (BTA). The talks will take place here from 2 to 4 June.

On 3 February, both sides had announced the framework for the first phase of the BTA.

"While finalising, we have to see how the legal changes that have taken place in the US be reflected in the final agreement, and what kind of changes will be made. After finalising that, I am confident that we will conclude the first tranche of the BTA and start discussions on how to have a more comprehensive BTA," he told reporters.

- US had removed the 25 per cent tariffs on Indian goods for buying Russian oil

The US team will be led by its chief negotiator Brendan Lynch. India's chief negotiator Darpan Jain is an additional secretary in the Department of Commerce.

The two sides are "expected to finalise details of the interim agreement and take forward the negotiations under the broader BTA on market access, non-tariff measures, customs and trade facilitation, investment promotion and economic security alignment," he said.

On 7 February, India and the US issued a joint statement finalising the first phase of the BTA or an interim trade agreement. Now, both sides will have to finalise the legal text for that deal. The US agreed to reduce tariffs on India to 18 per cent from 50 per cent. It had removed the 25 per cent tariffs on Indian goods for buying Russian oil and will cut the remaining 25 per cent to 18 per cent under the pact. — *PTI*

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal during a meeting with global private equity firm Warburg Pincus' Chairman Chip Kaye on Monday, to discuss expanding investments in India —*PTI*

35 MLAs take oath as ministers in West Bengal

KOLKATA, JUNE 1

35 Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Members of Legislative Assembly (MLAs) took oath, administered by Governor RN Ravi, as ministers on Monday as West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari expanded his cabinet, taking the total strength of the council of ministers to 41.

While 13 BJP MLAs were sworn in as cabinet ministers, three took oath as Ministers Of State (Independent Charge) and 19 others as Ministers of State (MoS).

The BJP inducted Kalyan Chakraborty, a professor from Khardaha, as cabinet ministers. An oncologist from Behala Paschim, Indranil Khan, was sworn in as Minister of State (MoS) (Independent Charge), while Kalita Majhi, who worked as a house help before foraying into politics, was awarded the position of minister of state.

West Bengal Governor RN Ravi administers oath of office to 13 BJP MLAs at the Lok Bhavan, in Kolkata on Monday —*PTI*

Journalist-turned-politician Swapan Dasgupta, who won the prestigious Rashbehari seat in south Kolkata, was also awarded a cabinet berth.

Minister Nisith Pramanik, a Rajbanshi leader from the Scheduled Caste-reserved Mathabhanga seat in Cooch Behar in northern West Bengal, is already in the cabinet. Nine new ministers from northern West Bengal took oath as well. Women ministers is now six, lower than the nine women in erstwhile Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's 2021 cabinet.

The expanded council currently comprises 14 ministers representing various ethnic groups of the state, 11 of whom are from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC ST) categories. The total count of ministers representing backward castes is 15. —*PTI*

Eye on China, India & Aus talk maritime freedom

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

India and Australia on Monday highlighted the importance of maritime freedom, overflight, and unimpeded trade amid recent disruptions in energy supply chains caused by the West Asia crisis and concerns over China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific. These issues featured prominently during extensive talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Australian Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles.

The two leaders reaffirmed the need to strengthen regional cooperation to maintain a free and stable Indo-Pacific. They underscored the strategic significance of defence industrial collaboration and announced plans to develop a Memorandum of Understanding on defence articles and services.

The joint statement mentioned progress in bilateral maritime security cooperation and efforts to finalise the Joint Maritime Security Collaboration Roadmap, including activities involving maritime patrol aircraft and undersea domain awareness.

Singh described the meeting as "excellent" and said, "The India-Australia Defence Partnership is poised to make steady progress in the years to come." —*PTI*

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during a meeting with Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Richard Marles, in New Delhi —*PTI*

TMC expels two 'anti-party' MLAs

KOLKATA, JUNE 1

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) on Monday expelled two of its MLAs, Sandipan Saha and Ritabrata Banerjee, for alleged anti-party activities.

Minutes before the expulsion notice arrived, West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari said the two TMC legislators had assisted in the Assembly secretariat in lodging a complaint about a case of forged signatures from the TMC legislative party endorsing Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay as Leader of Opposition (LoP).

Adhikari said the probe was handed over to the state Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on directions of the home secretary at his own approval, following which the agency questioned 13 TMC MLAs in the presence of handwriting experts and videographers.

"At least three TMC MLAs - Baharul Islam, Arup Roy and Subhasis Das - have told investigators that the signatures do not belong to them," Adhikari said.

TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh, however, alleged that bypassing the party leadership to approach the Assembly Speaker amounts to a "betrayal."

Defending the party's decision to expel two MLAs for alleged anti-party activities, Ghosh "thanked" Adhikari for publicly naming the MLAs who had complained to the Speaker. —*PTI*

NEVER EXPECTED TO BE MINISTER: RG KAR VICTIM'S MOTHER

RG Kar victim's mother Ratna Debnath said she was not bothered by the fact that her name was not included in the council of ministers, and asserted that she would continue to serve the people of West Bengal as a legislator. Debnath, whose daughter was raped and murdered on the premises of RG Kar Medical College in August 2024, leading to widespread protests across the state, said her entry to politics was driven by her demand for justice for her daughter and not for power.

Neither Debnath, who won from the Panihati assembly constituency, nor Hingalganj MLA Rekha Patra found a place in the cabinet despite speculation in some political circles over their possible induction.

MP to implement UCC, CM asks public to opine

BHOPAL, 1 JUNE

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Monday said that the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) will soon be implemented in the state, urging the public to submit their suggestions on a newly launched dedicated consultation portal.

Yadav, in a statement to the media, said that a six-member committee, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prasad Desai, will gather opinions from religious leaders on implementing the UCC in the state. It is currently touring various districts to gather input from stakeholders. Appealing to citizens, social groups, and religious organisations to actively participate in the process, he said that as of now, there is no need for religious, social, or familial differences to affect the matter.

This will be the fourth state to implement UCC after Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Assam. West Bengal is also in line, after the BJP's victory in its recent state elections. — *PTI*

Cow is our mother, our 'Rashtra Mata', not an animal: Yogi

BIJNOR, 1 JUNE

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath hit out at Muslim organisations for demanding that the cow be declared the national animal, saying that the cow is revered as "mother" in the Sanatan tradition and is "not an animal for us."

He referred to demands by Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind president Maulana Arshad Madani and some other Muslim groups for granting the cow the national animal tag, and said their remarks reek of hypocrisy as these very people "promote cow slaughter."

He said "there was no need for 'akranta' (invaders) to teach about the status of the cow."Adityanath was addressing a function organised for the distribution of land ownership certificates to 1,645 displaced families from Pakistan and to ex-servicemen.

He also criticised Muslim clerics' silence on the plight of religious minorities in neighbouring countries. He claimed that if waqf land had been offered for the rehabilitation of displaced families, it would have demonstrated sensitivity.

Adityanath also attacked the opposition over their criticism of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), to provide citizenship to persecuted Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan. — *PTI*

CJP Founder to return to India, seek Pradhan's resignation

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Announcing his return to India on 6 June, Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) Founder Abhijeet Dipke said on Monday that he is returning to hold a protest "to ask for the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan" over recent examination-related lapses.

Dipke took to social media to urge CJP supporters and students to join him at the Delhi airport on Saturday morning, from where they would go to the Parliament Street police station to seek permission for a peaceful protest at Jantar Mantar.

He claims that examination controversies had affected more than one crore students, including those appearing for NEET, CBSE, CUET and SSC GD, leaving them worried about their future.

Claiming that an online petition seeking the education minister's resignation has garnered eight lakh signatures, Dipke said protests over education-related issues were being held in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra.

Launched in May by Dipke, the CJP has evolved from an online movement into a vehicle for youth activism.

Backed by high-profile endorsements, the group has mobilised heavily around the NEET-UG 2026 exam leak controversy. —*PTI*

'WILL CLARIFY IN 2 DAYS'

Annamalai may quit BJP to start his own party

CHENNAI, 1 JUNE

Amid speculations that he was sulking in the BJP and that he may float a new political party, the saffron party leader from Tamil Nadu, K Annamalai, on Monday said he would clarify his stand in two days.

Asked about speculations, Annamalai, before leaving for Delhi, told reporters that he would provide answers in two days. There was buzz that he is heading to Delhi to meet party chief Nitin Nabin.

The former state president's opposition to the recent CBSE's announcement on implementing the three-language policy for Class 9 students from the current academic year, and his demand to roll back the notification, fuelled speculation that he was opposing the Centre.

The former IPS official who played a crucial role in roping in TTV Dhinakaran and former Chief Minister O Panneerselvam for the 2021 Assembly election has been maintaining a low profile after the party high command replaced him with Nainar Nagenthran and revived the electoral pact with the AIADMK ahead of the 2026 Assembly election.

Though the party members from Coimbatore expected him to contest this Assembly election, he later clarified that he opted out of the race.

However, after the NDA's dream of forming the first NDA government was shattered by Vijay-led TVK, there were rumblings within the saffron party over the state leadership.

The BJP managed to win only one seat. —*PTI*

As BJP President, Annamalai famously flogged himself to protest the sexual assault of a student in 2024 —*PTI*

Vijay denies horsetrading charges, slams Oppn

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI, 1 JUNE

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday rejected opposition allegations of horse-trading and accused main rivals DMK and AIADMK of secretly attempting to form the government to loot. Addressing his first rally here since assuming office on 10 May, Vijay criticised the DMK for persistent attacks on him and his party, the TVK, and blamed their "family politics" for their defeat in the 23 April Assembly election.

He stated, "The people have made me the 'first sewak', not chief minister," adding that criticism from DMK only benefits the TVK. He alleged that after the election results on 4 May, both parties engaged in secret negotiations to form a government for personal gain. "It was because if the TVK formed the government, their 'business'—loot and corruption—would be lost," he claimed, calling the DMK an "evil force" and the AIADMK a "spent force."

Vijay also criticised the opposition for quick criticism, despite initial promises to wait six months. Addressing supporters at St Joseph's College, he expressed gratitude for their support, emphasising his connection to Tiruchirappalli and claiming, "You have extended such tremendous support to the TVK." —*PTI*

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay in Tiruchirappalli on Monday —*PTI*

Court convicts man, mom in dowry death case

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

A Delhi court has convicted Jitender and his mother Rambati in a dowry death case after his wife Pooja died by hanging in her matrimonial home in East Gokalpur on 21 August, 2016. The court stated, "The prosecution has established that a few days prior to her death, the accused subjected her to torture and harassment for more dowry of Rs 50,000 and beat her to meet demands." Pooja's family alleged dowry demands began before marriage, including a dispute over a motorcycle. She visited her parental home shortly before her death, complaining of harassment. The court found that the couple's cruelty persisted throughout her married life, establishing the offence of dowry death. —*PTI*

Neighbour rapes 80-year-old UP woman, arrested

HATHRAS, 1 JUNE

An 80-year-old woman was allegedly raped by her 28-year-old neighbour at her residence in Hathras on Monday. Police said the incident occurred around 9am when she was alone at home. The man entered her room and assaulted her, taking advantage of her solitude. Locals heard her cries for help, after which the suspect fled. Police reached the scene, and the woman was taken to hospital for a medical examination. Sadar Circle Officer Himanshu Mathur confirmed the suspect was in custody, and legal action will follow based on the examination report and complaint. —*PTI*

Man linked to Rs 50L insurance claim murder held

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Chandan Kumar, 46, wanted for nearly nine years, has been arrested in Bihar's Lakhisarai in connection with the murder of Anita Devi, 43, over a Rs 50 lakh insurance claim and property. The case was registered in 2017. The police said, "Kamal Kumar, her brother, conspired with his brothers-in-law Chandan and Kundan to kill Anita for the insurance payout and property rights." Anita was murdered in August 2017; her throat was slit. Chandan, who had been declared a proclaimed offender in 2018, was tracked down after fleeing following the crime. Kundan died in 2018. —*PTI*

Owner in Saket building collapse case arrested

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

The Delhi Police has arrested the owner of the multi-storey building that collapsed in Saket on Saturday, killing six people and injuring eight others, officials said on Monday. Karamveer is the owner of the building in Saidulajab near the Saket Metro station that came crashing down on Saturday. It housed a coaching institute, cafes and offices, and construction work was underway on its uppermost floor at the time of the collapse. Police said Karamveer was arrested as part of the investigation into the crash. Meanwhile, rescue operations are nearing its end, with teams still deployed to ensure safety at the building site. —*PTI*

SC rejects plea to conduct NEET-UG retest in CBT mode

NTA facing too many problems, says SC

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

The Supreme Court refused to accept a plea seeking the conduct of the NEET-UG 2026 re-test on 21 June in computer-based test mode, saying that the National Testing Agency is already facing too many problems.

Justices PS Narasimha and Aravind Kumar, who posted the plea by RJD MP Sudhakar Singh and others for hearing on 27 July, refused to order the conduct of the NEET-UG in computer-based test (CBT) mode instead of the existing pen-and-paper method.

On 12 May, the NTA cancelled the NEET-UG held on 3 May for medical admissions amid allegations of question paper leak. The CBI is investigating the matter, and a retest is scheduled for 21 June.

At the outset itself, advocate Satyam Singh Rajput who appeared for the petitioners said they are not pressing any other request but only one related to conducting the re-test in CBT mode. The bench said that similar requests were earlier dismissed by the court.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the SC that the government is concerned about the concerns of students and Prime Minister Modi is supervising the situation" An affidavit filed by the NTA said that it is all set to conduct the NEET-UG in CBT mode from next year. — *PTI*

Court sends 3 to 14 days judicial custody

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

A Delhi court on Monday sent three accused in the NEET paper leak case, a physics translator empanelled by the NTA, a Latur-based paediatrician and a physics tutor, to 14 days judicial custody.

Special Judge Ajay Gupta allowed the CBI's plea seeking judicial custody of physics translator Manisha Sanjay Hawaldar, paediatrician Dr Manoj Shirure and physics teacher Tejas Harshadkumar Shah.Hawaldar's CBI custody was extended by two days on Saturday, while Shirure and Shah were sent to five days custodial interrogation on 27 May. The CBI alleged that Hawaldar had without authorisation kept and distributed the NEET-UG question paper for money. — *PTI*

STILL SHORT OF 1 JUDGE

SC gets 5 new judges; strength to go up to 37

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Five new judges were on Monday appointed to the Supreme Court. The SC will now have 37 judges, one short of the upgraded sanctioned strength of 38.

Notifications issued by the department of justice in the Union law ministry on Monday said senior SC advocate Venkita Subramani Mohana, Justice Shree Chandrashekhar, Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, Justice Sheel Nagu, Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana High Court, Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva, Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court, and Justice Arun Palli, Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court have been elevated as SC judges.

Once they take oath and assume charge, the SC will have 37 judges.

The government last month promulgated an ordinance amending a law to increase the sanctioned strength of the SC to 38 from 34, including the CJI.

While there were already two vacancies, after the sanctioned strength was increased, altogether six posts became vacant in the apex court. With five appointments on Monday, the Supreme Court has only one vacancy. — *PTI*

MOHANA IS 2ND WOMAN TO BE ELEVATED TO SC FROM BAR

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Senior advocate Venkita Subramani Mohana, who was appointed a judge in the Supreme Court on Monday, has become the second woman in the country to be directly elevated to the SC from the Bar after Justice Indu Malhotra in 2018.

Mohana will be one of the two serving women judges in the Supreme Court along with Justice BV Nagarathna.

Justice Nagarathna will also become the CJI for around a month in 2027.

Mohana, 59, graduated from the Coimbatore Law College in 1988 and has been practising since then.

She has appeared in several high-profile cases, including matters related to permanent commission for women officers in the armed forces, senior citizens' property rights, and the Karnataka hijab ban case.

Mohana will be the 12th woman judge in the history of the Supreme Court, and the second to be elevated directly from the Bar.

She will retire in June 2031. — *PTI*

Women collect their scheme certificates in Thane —*ANI*

80 lakh M'rashtra women ineligible for Ladki Bahin

MUMBAI, 1 JUNE

Around 80 lakh women have become ineligible for the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin scheme following an e-KYC deadline, sparking allegations from the Opposition that the Maharashtra government was weeding out beneficiaries due to a "severe financial crisis."

The Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin scheme aims to give economic freedom to women aged between 21 and 65 by giving them a monthly allowance of Rs 1,500.

A senior official on Monday, however, said that the beneficiary count has dropped from 2.4 crore to nearly 1.7 crore after the 30 April e-KYC deadline, but the disqualifications were also linked to non-compliance with eligibility criteria.

The government had provided an eight-month window for beneficiaries to complete their e-KYC, he said.

"Around 50 to 55 lakh women failed to complete the process entirely, while two to three lakh rectified errors during this period. Additionally, nearly 12 lakh women were found to be income-tax payers exceeding the annual income cap of Rs 2.5 lakh, and over 4.5 lakh had crossed the upper age limit of 65 years," the official said.

He denied that 80 lakh women were dropped from the scheme solely on the grounds of non-completion of e-KYC.

Opposition NCP (SP) leader Jayant Patil, meanwhile, claimed that the dropping of beneficiaries from the scheme reflects the "severe financial crisis" faced by the state government. — *PTI*

Upset over NEET cancellation, Jharkhand girl commits suicide

CHENNAI, 1 JUNE

A NEET hopeful was found dead in Jharkhand's Koderma district, after which her family claimed that she took her life as she was upset that the medical entrance test was cancelled.

The incident took place in Chitragupt Nagar in the Telaiya police station area on Sunday night, police said.

The 17-year-old girl was alone in her room when her family called her for dinner. After receiving no response for a long time, her family members forced open the door and found her body hanging with a scarf, they said.

She was rushed to a hospital, where doctors declared her dead, they added.

A case of unnatural death was registered, Telaiya police station in-charge Vinay Kumar said.

The girl's father said she had appeared for the NEET-UG on 3 May and had been optimistic about her performance at the exam.

She became distressed after the examination was cancelled and was worried that the retest would be more challenging, he said. She feared that she may not qaulify in the new test and all her efforts would be wasted.

"We counselled her several times, and she appeared to be coping with the situation. She had resumed her preparation and was regularly taking online tests," the father, who is an insurance agent, told PTI.

He said his daughter was taking an online test on Sunday evening to brush up her preparations for the coming test.

"At dinner time, we called her several times, but there was no response. We became concerned and broke into the room to find her body," he said.

The family originally hails from Bihar's Nawada district, and the deceased was her parents' only child.

On 12 May, the National Testing Authority (NTA) cancelled the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate), or NEET-UG, for medical admissions amid allegations of paper leak. A re-examination has been scheduled for 21 June.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which is probing the allegations, has arrested 13 persons. They were produced in court, have been charged under various BNS sections and were remanded. — PTI

CBI recreates crime scene at Twisha's marital home

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

The CBI on Monday did a crime scene recreation in the case of the death of former model-actor Twisha Sharma, official said. Sharma allegedly hung herself on the terrace of her marital home in Bhopal on 12 May.

A dummy weighing similar to the deceased was used to mimic the crime scene in the presence of her husband Samarth Singh and his mother Giribala Singh, they said. The two were asked to enact and explain events after the incident to the agency and forensic and crime scene experts. —*PTI*

IIT ADMISSIONS

Shubham tops JEE-Advanced, Arohi girl topper

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Shubham Kumar from Delhi zone topped the IIT entrance exam JEE-Advanced with 330 out of 360 marks, officials announced on Monday.

A total of 56,880 candidates had qualified for the Joint Entrance Examination (Advanced) 2026. Of the qualified candidates, 10,107 are females and 46,773 males.

One third-gender candidate, who appeared for the exam, could not make it. The exam also saw 3,052 PwD candidates register, of whom 2,864 appeared in both papers and 887 qualified.

Meet the JEE Advanced 2026 toppers: (l to r) Shubham Kumar, Kabeer Chhillar, Jatin Chahar and Arohi Deshpande —*ALLEN CAREER INSTITUTE*

Shubham Kumar of IIT Delhi zone secured the top rank in the Common Rank List (CRL), scoring 330 out of 360 marks.

Arohi Deshpande of IIT Delhi zone emerged as the top-ranked female candidate with an All India Rank (CRL) of 77. She scored 280 out of 360 marks.

Kabeer Chhillar came second scoring 329 marks. Jatin Chahar secured the third rank with 319 marks.

IIT Roorkee said 1,79,694 candidates appeared in both papers of JEE (Advanced) 2026 conducted on 17 May, out of the 1,87,389 registered candidates.

The IIT Madras zone had the highest number of qualified candidates at 14,294, followed by IIT Bombay with 12,389 and IIT Delhi with 10,697 qualified candidates. Candidates can access their results and download the final answer key through the official JEE Advanced website. — *PTI*

Manipur Naga apex body cancels release of 14 Kukis

IMPHAL/SENAPATI, 1 JUNE

The apex body of Naga tribes in Manipur cancelled the scheduled release of 14 Kuki civilians after disagreements with certain youth leaders and stakeholders of the tribal community.

In a statement, the United Naga Council said on Monday, "Considering the prevailing sentiments of the Naga public, the proposed release of the 14 Kuki detainees, earlier scheduled at 2 pm on 1 June, stands cancelled."

The 14 Kuki civilians were detained and taken hostage on 13 May and were scheduled to be released on Monday afternoon before being taken to Kangpokpi district for a reception programme.

The decision to facilitate their release triggered resentment among some Naga groups and civil society organisations, which alleged that the move had been taken without adequate consultation with stakeholders in the Naga-majority district, officials said. Multiple meetings were held among the Naga civil society organisations and student bodies at Senapati for hours, where it was pointed out that the fate of six Nagas abducted by Kuki groups remains unknown, officials added. Naga groups pointed out that the whereabouts of the six Naga youths held hostage must be first revealed by Kukis before releasing the Kuki hostages. — *PTI*

LAST GOLDEN VOICE

Suman Kalyanpur given send-off with state honours

MUMBAI, 1 JUNE

The strains of "Rahen Na Rahen Hum" echoed as the last rites of Suman Kalyanpur, a legendary playback singer, were held here on Monday with state honours.

She should have been part of a Lata-Asha-Suman playback powerhouse but may not have received full recognition. The singer, known for melodies from "Na Tum Hamen Jano" to "Aaj Kal Tere Mere," died on Sunday night at 89.

Her body was draped in the tricolour, and Mumbai Police offered a ceremonial salute at the Santacruz auditorium where her daughter Charu performed the rites. Friends sang "Rahen Na Rahen Hum, Meheka Karenge" from "Mamta" as the pyre was lit, honouring a singer who made her mark despite the dominance of Mangeshkar sisters.

President Murmu called her death "an irreparable loss to the world of Indian art," praising her singing in Hindi, Marathi, and other languages. Prime Minister Modi expressed grief, stating her "melodious voice and soulful renditions enriched our cultural world." Kalyanpur, known for "Behna Ne Bhai Ki Kalai Mein" and "Na Na Karke Pyaar," was the only female of her era to secure a space in the Hindi scene.

Her voice was often compared to Mangeshkar's, which was both a blessing and a curse. Her breakthrough came during a royalty dispute between Mangeshkar and Rafi, leading to over 100 duets with Rafi. — *PTI*

Family members pay their last respects to the mortal remains of veteran singer Suman Kalyanpur during her last rites in Mumbai on Monday—*PTI*

GANG'S SUV MOWS DOWN LANKAN REFUGEE TEEN AFTER BAR FIGHT

CHENNAI, 1 JUNE

An 18-year-old woman was mowed down by an SUV which hit the two-wheeler she was riding on Chennai's Koyambedu flyover on Saturday night. A minor girl, who was on the pillion, has been hospitalised with serious injuries.

A senior officer of the Greater Chennai Police said Yancy, 18, was the daughter of Mary Stella, staying at the Sri Lankan Tamil Rehabilitation Camp at Anichankuppam in Villupuram district.Yancy had befriended the minor living at Ramapuram in Chennai through social media. Yancy, who came to stay in the house of the minor last week visited a bar at Koyambedu on Saturday night.

As they were dancing in the bar, a gang picked up a quarrel with Yancy. The guards at the bar asked them to leave. After coming out, they had an altercation and Yancy was assaulted.

As Yancy and the minor girl were returning home, the gang, waiting in an SUV, rammed their two-wheeler on the flyover.

Yancy, who was driving, suffered severe head injuries and died on the spot. The minor girl suffered severe injuries, and was rushed to the Government Kilpauk Medical College.

The Koyambedu police initially filed an accidental death case. But they changed it to murder after analysing CCTV footage.

The police initially arrested two N. Balaguru of Ekattuthangal and M. Kishore Kumar of Nerkundram. After interrogating them, the police nabbed A. Suman Sakthivel, Mohan and Muthukannan. They are now looking for the sixth person. Suman was driving the SUV, the officer said.

The Koyambedu police are also investigating how the minor girl was allowed into the bar. — *Agencies*

WHO WON, WHO LOST, WHO SUSTAINED THEIR WINNING CULTURE

RCB celebrates their second consecutive IPL victory — PTI

Royal Challengers Bengaluru looked the part in another supremely successful campaign, Gujarat Titans maintained their remarkable play-off consistency while the underwhelming performance of IPL biggies Mumbai Indians and laggards Lucknow Super Giants set off the transition for the next season even before the curtains came down on the 2026 edition.

A quick look at the how the season went by for the 10 teams in the world's grandest T20 league.

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BENGALURU:

The franchise, starved of an IPL title for 18 years, seems to have made winning a habit after their pathbreaking triumph last season. The think tank led by Andy Flower and Mo Bobat have put together a champion squad that is delivering handsomely on the field.

RCB would wish there is no mega auction in the foreseeable future with majority of the players in the squad taking their game to the next level season after season. Their mindset this season was not defend their title, it was to aggressively chase for another trophy. They certainly walked the talk on that front.

Superstar Virat Kohli keeps reinventing his game even at this stage of his career to compete with "the super young", Bhuvneshwar Kumar turned back the clock with a stellar presentation of "wobbly seam" according to none other than Sachin Tendulkar. Devdutt Padikkal made clear changes to his conventional game to meet the demands of modern T20 while captain Rajat Patidar forced national selectors to take notice with his match winning performances.

Venkatesh Iyer was brought in as the impact player late in the tournament and he too delivered. RCB seemed like the most complete side of the competition and they surely played like one.

GUJARAT TITANS

If RCB have made winning a habit, Titans have emerged as one of the most consistent teams in its brief IPL history. They have made three finals in five attempts including a title on debut.

Shubman Gill, Sai Sudharsan and Jos Buttler kept piling on the runs at the top of the order. In case of their rare failure, the middle order doesn't inspire the same confidence and that is one area Titans looking to shore up at the next auction.

Their bowling was arguably the best in the tournament, yet they could not cross the final hurdle. Experts feel they are a side which doesn't have a Plan B in case their sublime top order and the new ball bowlers misfire. It seldom happened in the tournament but when it did, Titans could not find a way back.

SUNRISERS HYDERABAD

The Pat Cummins-led side did not do much do wrong this season after a slow start and were eventually outdone by the individual brilliance of Vaibhav Sooryavanshi and Jofra Archer in the Eliminator.

Among the big positives for them were the emergence of pacers like Praful Hinge and Sakib Hussain. The destructive top order including Abhishek Sharma, Travis Head and Ishan Kishan were again among the runs though the Australian did not have a season he probably wanted to considering his high standards.

SRH were good on flat tracks but not so good when they travelled outside Hyderabad.

RAJASTHAN ROYALS

By captain Riyan Parag's own admission, Royals should have qualified much earlier than final day of the league stage. Their campaign was heavily dependent on 15-year-old wonder kid Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, who ended up being the leading run getter in his first full season with 776 runs at an astonishing strike rate of 237.30.

Archer was among the leading wicket takers of the tournament with 25 scalps, proving the breakthroughs regularly in his opening burst. However, when both Sooryavanshi and Archer did not fire, the team struggled.

PUNJAB KINGS

The most dominant team of the IPL's first half somehow messed up their play-off chances in the second half, losing six games in a row. Their in-form batting covered up for a wayward bowling attack in the first half before their performance dipped in all three departments including fielding.

Captain Shreyas Iyer had a decent season with the bat but the team will have to bolster its bowling at the auction. The up and down performance Arshdeep Singh also impacted the team adversely.

DELHI CAPITALS

For the second season in a row, Delhi Capitals failed to make the play-offs under Axar Patel.

It was another season where KL Rahul scored 500 plus runs which actually had little or no value in the final context. The side did not have the batting firepower to push deeper into the tournament with too many one dimensional players in the line-up.

The bowling too did not have required potency, made worse by the absence of Mitchell Starc in the first half of the competition. DC are among the teams expected to change their leadership going forward.

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

KKR did well to finish seventh out of 10 teams after losing their first six games.

The team struggled in all departments and is in need of an overhaul. Cameron Green also did not have a season to remember after being bought for a record 25.20 crore at the auction.

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

The five time champions have not made the play-off since their title winning run in 2023.

The storied franchise led by Ruturaj Gaikwad needs a change of approach. First of all, there needs to be clarity over M S Dhoni so that they can move on from the glory days under the former India captain.

With Hardik Pandya set to leave Mumbai Indians, CSK could consider his services in a leadership role. Alternatively, Sanju Samson is a ready captaincy choice if they decide to go in that direction.

MUMBAI INDIANS

Mumbai Indians, a team full of India stars, disappointed the most this season. The quartet of Jasprit Bumrah, Hardik Pandya, Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Verma had a season to forget. Rohit Sharma did alright at the top but his season was impacted by injury. Throughout the season, there were murmurs of division within the leadership group with Hardik left to fight on his own, which affected the team's performance.

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS

A revamp for next season is already in motion following the stepping down of captain Rishabh Pant after two forgettable years.

The batting flopped big time while the bowlers led by Mohammed Shami, Mohsin Khan and Prince Yadav impressed. Mohsin was the only bowler who sent down an unprecedented maiden over to Sooryavanshi.

Justin Langer and Tom Moody along with Sanjiv Goenka will go on a captain shopping during mini-auction at the end of this year. —PTI

IPL 2026 REVIEW

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

HC upholds 'Right to be Forgotten', wants name-based search disabled

Recognising an individual's "right to be forgotten", the Delhi High Court has ruled that search engines like Google cannot be perpetually permitted to show judicial records in name-based search for a case which is private in nature or has ended in an acquittal, discharge, quashing or settlement.

Giving relief to a group of petitioners, the court ordered authorities, search engine operators and legal database platforms to de-index and disable their "name-based search functionality" in respect of judgments, orders and news articles cited by the petitioners.

The court, however, held that de-indexing is not appropriate in certain cases involving conviction for offences against women or children or for offences involving breach of public trust, offences by public servants, elected representatives, etc.

De-indexing refers to the removal of a specific web page or website from a search engine's database.

Justice Sachin Datta said while transparency is integral to judicial independence and accountability, the continued association of an individual's name with a judicial record online causes disproportionate harm to their informational privacy, dignity and reputation, which is not justified by any legitimate public interest.

The judge said the "right to be forgotten" -- which is a "broader manifestation of the right to privacy" under Article 21 of the Constitution -- protects individuals from "perpetual exposure" to irrelevant past events, and no legitimate aim is served by "unlimited and unrestricted name-based searchability" of judicial records related to proceedings that have been resolved.

The court passed the verdict on a batch of over thirty petitions by individuals who invoked their "right to be forgotten" to de-index judicial records from name-based search results and to mask their personal identifiers from publicly accessible digital versions of those records.

In its 144-page judgement, the court further ruled that the petitioners shall be at liberty to seek "masking" of their identity in the original judgement or order from the court concerned.

"The right to be forgotten, understood as subsuming the right of an individual to seek removal or restriction of personal information from public digital accessibility, where such information is no longer relevant or serves no legitimate public purpose, flows naturally and necessarily from the constitutional recognition of informational privacy under Article 21," said the court in the judgment passed on 29 May.

"In the categories of cases with which this court is concerned, inter alia, acquittals, discharges, quashings, settlements, compounding and disputes of purely private nature, no law authorises Google or any search engine to perpetually index and surface judicial records in a manner that overrides the individual's fundamental right to informational privacy.

The court, however, refused to grant relief to PP Madhva, who claimed to be a public figure and sought de-indexing after a settlement in a sexual offence case against him. The court clarified that there is a continuing public interest in the accessibility of proceedings that touch upon serious allegations against a public figure.

It also declined relief to reality show celebrity Ashutosh Kaushik who sought the removal of posts, videos and articles depicting several incidents of drunken behaviour, saying that "right to be forgotten" is not a mechanism for the "selective erasure" of a public figure's past conduct.

The court held that de-indexing is not appropriate in certain cases like those involving conviction for offences against women or children or for offences involving breach of public trust, offences by public servants, elected representatives, etc.

It added that de-indexing may be warranted if the case has abated due to a party's death and its digital accessibility harms the surviving family.

The court also said that since the fundamental right to informational privacy is not limited to a territory, de-indexing has to operate globally. While the concept of 'open justice' requires that judicial records be maintained and remain accessible to those with a legitimate purpose, it does not require that a private individual's name be used as a "permanent and unlimited retrieval key, through a commercial search engine" by any internet user to instantly access his engagement with legal processes, the court said.

Despite any de-indexing, the court records continue to remain accessible by case number, citation or other purposeful search, it added.

The court observed that search engines are commercial platforms that generate revenue by leveraging user searches and associating them with advertising opportunities, and Rule 3(1)(d) of the IT Rules obliges such intermediaries to comply with orders directing removal or restriction of content.

"All aforesaid directions shall be complied with within two weeks from today. Where relief has been granted, Google LLC/ Google Inc./Google India Private Ltd. and all other search engine operators are directed to de-index the relevant content, orders, judgments and associated reportage from name-based search results, and shall comply in the same manner," the court ordered. —PTI

— MAGNIFIC

Pak mkt timings revised amid austerity drive

ISLAMABAD, 1 JUNE

Pakistani authorities have reimposed early market closure timings in Islamabad, requiring businesses to shut by 8pm from Monday as part of austerity measures aimed at easing pressure on energy supplies. The District Administration said marriage halls, marquees and event venues must close by 10pm, including events on private premises. Pharmacies, hospitals, petrol pumps, dairy shops, sports facilities, call centres and IT firms serving international clients are exempt. The restrictions, first introduced in March following a surge in fuel prices, were temporarily relaxed for Eid. Business groups continue to oppose the early closures. —*PTI*

Nepal Parliament suspended over PM's land remarks

KATHMANDU, 1 JUNE

Nepal Parliament sessions were adjourned after Prime Minister Balen Shah's controversial comments on land encroachment led to protests by opposition MPs. During the first National Assembly meeting, lawmakers opposed Balen's statement on Sunday, where he said Nepal had encroached Indian territory and suggested Nepal, India, China, and the UK were seeking resolutions through historians and surveyors. The protests disrupted proceedings, prompting Chairperson Narayan Prasad Dahal to suspend the session for 20 minutes, but MPs continued their protests upon resumption. Consequently, the meeting was adjourned until 1.15pm on Tuesday. A parliamentary probe committee has been formed under Secretary Prakash Adhikari to investigate MPs' behaviour. —*PTI*

6 killed as drunk driver rams festival revellers in Lanka

COLOMBO, 1 JUNE

At least six people were killed and 13 injured after an allegedly intoxicated driver rammed a vehicle into revellers celebrating Wesak, police said. The incident occurred on Sunday night at a roadside stall in Meegoda, a suburb of Colombo. Three men aged 35-38 and three women aged 15-56 died in the crash. Thirteen others, including an infant, received serious injuries and were hospitalised. The 42-year-old driver fled but was arrested miles away; investigations found he was intoxicated. Wesak, commemorating Lord Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and passing, sees large crowds and congestion due to stalls and traffic during celebrations. —*PTI*

— X

5 killed in blast at S Korean defence facility

SEOUL, 1 JUNE

An explosion and fire at a Hanwha Aerospace site in Daejeon, South Korea, on Monday killed five and injured two, officials said. The incident occurred at a government-designated security facility, with cause still unknown. Emergency official Yoon Seong-su stated one injured person is in critical condition, and the identities of the deceased remain undisclosed. The site develops large propellants and weapon systems. Kim Ju-yeon confirmed the two injured are receiving treatment, with one in critical condition. The explosion occurred at a key industrial site, raising concerns about safety at military-related facilities. —*PTI*

Iran denies reports about President's resignation

Pezeshkian is allegedly miffed with IRGC's growing influence

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian recently said citizens should be informed about the realities facing the country, including its capacities, limitations and shared responsibilities —*OFFICE OF THE IRANIAN SUPREME LEADER*

TEHRAN, 1 JUNE

Iran's Presidential Office has denied reports that President Masoud Pezeshkian had submitted his resignation to the Office of the Supreme Leader Khamenei.

According to London-based anti-regime outlet Iran International, Pezeshkian sent an official resignation letter on Sunday in which he stated that his government's role in major decisions was declining under the increasing influence of hardline groups such as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). He added that he was could not carry out his constitutional or administrative duties in this manner, and requested permission to step down immediately.

The media report also cited anonymous sources that claimed Pezeshkian and the head of the IRGC, who is believed to currently be at the top of the regime's power hierarchy, clashed over "the way the war (with the United States and Israel) was managed and its destructive consequences on the people's livelihoods and the country's economy."

Furthermore, the report claimed that there have been "months of tensions" between the Iranian government and its military and security establishments. It said that the IRGC had moved to restrict many presidential powers and effectively taken over vital sections of the government.

However, the IRGC-linked Tasnim News Agency reported, based on informed government sources, that Pezeshkian remains in office.

Seyed Mehdi Tabatabaei, Deputy Head of Communications and Information at the President's Office, in a post on X, accused the foreign-based outlet of "rumour-mongering" and said the claims were part of "ridiculous media games." He also said that the baseless reports showed "wishful thinking rather than reality."

Pezeshkian had recently stressed on transparency, saying that citizens should be informed about the country's capacities, limitations and responsibilities. He had also noted that external pressures had created major issues for governance.

Pezeshkian's election campaign had focused on reform and higher involvement with the international community. He has found it difficult to form policy around these promises given Iran's complex power structure.

Meanwhile, US officials told CBS last week that Khamenei is sequestered in a nearly inaccessible location, and can only be reached by a network of couriers. Even the government highest officials in Iran cannot contact him directly and don't know his specific location, they added. —*Salar News*

US FORCES GUIDE 70 SHIPS THROUGH HORMUZ: REPORT

US armed forces have guided around 70 commercial vessels through the Strait of Hormuz over the past three weeks, according to a media report.

Citing US officials, The New York Times reported that US Central Command escorted ships travelling in and out of the Persian Gulf through the narrow and sensitive waterway, which has remained volatile since the war between the US and Iran began in February.

Officials said many vessels turned off transponders to avoid detection during "dark" passages. The strait, which carries about 20 per cent of global oil, remains a key shipping route, with US-guided movements reportedly avoiding Iranian coastal waters.

Israel orders strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs

BEIRUT, 1 JUNE

Residents inspect an apartment building damaged in an Israeli airstrike in Dahiyeh, Lebanon —*PTI*

Israel ordered air strikes on Beirut's southern suburbs on Monday after Hezbollah launched fresh rocket and missile attacks into northern Israel, including areas near Haifa, despite a ceasefire that has nominally been in place since 17 April.

In a joint statement, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Israel Katz accused Hezbollah of repeatedly violating the truce and said the military had been instructed to target sites in Dahiyeh, the Hezbollah stronghold in Beirut's southern suburbs. Following the warning, thousands of residents fled the area, causing severe traffic congestion.

The escalation came a day after Israeli ground forces reached their deepest position inside Lebanon in 26 years. Overnight Israeli air strikes in southern Lebanon killed six people, including a Syrian national near Nabatiyeh, according to Lebanese state media.

Israel's military said it intercepted two projectiles fired from Lebanon and a suspected aerial target near areas where its troops are operating. No injuries were reported. Hezbollah claimed responsibility for rocket and missile attacks on northern Israel on Sunday.

The renewed hostilities come ahead of a new round of US-mediated talks between Israel and Lebanon in Washington on Tuesday. A US official said Secretary of State Marco Rubio had proposed a framework under which Hezbollah would halt attacks and Israel would avoid escalating operations in Beirut. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun reportedly welcomed the proposal.

Since fighting resumed, 3,412 people have been killed in Lebanon and more than 1 million displaced. —*PTI*

UAE condemns settlers storming Al-Aqsa Mosque

ABU DHABI, 1 JUNE

United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Monday strongly condemned the entry of Israeli settlers into the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound under Israeli police protection and the raising of the Israeli flag within the site, describing the actions as a provocation and an unacceptable act of extremism.

UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs called for respect for the historical and legal status quo at Al-Aqsa Mosque and stressed the need to protect all holy sites. It also reaffirmed support for Jordan's custodial role in overseeing the mosque's religious endowments and administration. The compound is Islam's third-holiest site. Jews revere the area as the Temple Mount, believed to be the location of ancient biblical temples. Some extremist settler groups advocate the construction of a third Jewish temple at the site.

UAE urged Israel to halt actions that could destabilise the region and reiterated its rejection of practices that violate international deals. —*ANI*

Palestinian man killed at West Bank barrier

Palestinian man was shot dead by Israeli forces while attempting to cross the barrier separating the occupied West Bank from Jerusalem, the Palestinian Health Ministry said on Sunday. The victim, 26-year-old Imad Haroun Ishtayeh from Salem near Nablus, was shot in the thigh in al-Ram and later died at a hospital in Ramallah. A former poultry business owner supporting his ill father, Ishtayeh had reportedly sought work in Israel after worsening economic conditions in the West Bank. The incident comes amid rising unemployment following restrictions on Palestinian workers entering Israel. Palestinian trade unions say around 50 workers have been killed and more than 38,000 arrested since access was tightened. Elsewhere, two Palestinians were killed and at least 10 injured after a group was struck near Gaza City's port. In the West Bank, two Israeli teenagers were injured in a suspected ramming attack near Gush Etzion Junction. Israeli forces said the attacker was shot dead. —*PTI*

Trump says Iran keen on deal, urges critics to 'relax'

WASHINGTON, 1 JUNE

US President Donald Trump said Iran is eager to reach a deal with Washington and maintained that any agreement would benefit the United States and its allies.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump criticised Democrats and some Republicans for publicly commenting on negotiations, arguing that such interventions make his job more difficult.

He urged critics to "sit back and relax", expressing confidence that the process would ultimately produce a favourable outcome.

According to CBS News, Trump has sought further revisions to a proposed agreement aimed at extending a ceasefire.

The latest draft reportedly includes a 60-day halt in hostilities, reopening the Strait of Hormuz, and a framework for renewed talks on Iran's nuclear programme. No final agreement has yet been announced.

Trump reiterated that preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons remains a key condition of any deal.

In Tehran, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei said exchanges with Washington were taking place in an atmosphere of deep mistrust, accusing the US of shifting positions and complicating efforts to reach an understanding.

Baghaei also accused Israel of attempting to derail the deal by attacking Lebanon. —*PTI*

French Navy intercepted tanker from Russia: Macron

PARIS, 1 JUNE

The French Navy, with support from the United Kingdom, has intercepted an oil tanker under international sanctions that was travelling from Russia. This is the latest effort by nations that support Ukraine to target Russian oil exports helping to finance President Vladimir Putin's war.

French President Emmanuel Macron announced the interception in a post Monday on X, saying the Tagor was boarded on Sunday in the Atlantic. The post included a video showing a person rappelling from a helicopter onto a ship.

"It is unacceptable that boats skirt international sanctions, violate the law of the sea and finance the war that Russia has been waging for more than 4 years against Ukraine," Macron wrote.

Oil revenue is a key part of Russia's economy, allowing Putin to pour money into the war effort against Ukraine without worsening inflation for everyday people and avoiding a currency collapse. Russia is believed to be using a fleet of hundreds of ships to evade international sanctions imposed over the war. France and other nations vowed to crack down on "shadow fleet." —*PTI*

Confirmed Ebola cases in Congo rise to 282

BUNIA, 1 JUNE

At least 282 confirmed cases of Ebola have now been reported in Congo's ongoing outbreak, the central African nation said late on Sunday. The outbreak remains focused in Congo's eastern Ituri province, where 264 of the cases have been recorded, Congo's Ministry of Health said.

Congo has reported over 1,000 suspected cases with the Bundibugyo virus, the current species of Ebola, which has no approved treatment or vaccine.

Meanwhile, five people have so far recovered from the disease. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has said all five survivors are health workers.

Meanwhile hundreds of youths in Kenya's central town of Nanyuki on Monday demonstrated against the establishment of an Ebola quarantine centre for American citizens at the Laikipia Air Base.

The protests come two days after Kenya's High Court suspended the establishment of the facility and the arrival of any foreign patients ahead of hearing a case against it, that cites Kenya's fragile health system as the reason why the centre should not be built.

US officials had said on Thursday that the United States was planning to send Americans exposed to Ebola while abroad to a new facility in Kenya. —*PTI*

Indian wins wage battle against UK sponsor

LONDON, 1 JUNE

An Indian care worker has won over £28,000 in unpaid wages and holiday pay after a tribunal found his UK sponsor failed to provide him with work. Shabin Shaji, 33, arrived in the UK through the Health and Care Worker visa route, with a sponsorship certificate from Swan Care Solutions Ltd. He stated the sponsor never offered him work or paid him, amounting to unauthorised wage deduction. Employment Judge Edmonds confirmed Shaji's employment from 15 April 2023, to 21 April 2024, with a gross salary of £22,880 annually, based on a 40-hour week. The judge highlighted that Shaji was ready and able to work but was prevented by the sponsor's failure. "The respondent withheld work from him, which was an external and involuntary factor," the ruling noted.

The company was ordered to cover legal costs and remedy expenses. Shaji, from Keralam, faced hardship before securing alternative employment. The Work Rights Centre supports many such cases, warning that stricter rules may impact migrant healthcare workers.

Dr Dora-Olivia Vicol urged ministers to focus on the needs of workers and public services. —*PTI*

Pro-Trump candidate leads in Colombia Prez polls

BOGOTA, 1 JUNE

Tough-on-crime outsider Aberaldo de la Espriella has taken the lead in Colombia's presidential race in the first round of voting held on Sunday, setting up a runoff with Iván Cepeda, an ally of outgoing President Gustavo Petro.

With no candidate securing an outright majority, the election will proceed to a second round in June. Cepeda, a progressive senator, secured 41 per cent of the vote, while de la Espriella won 44 per cent.

Cepeda and Petro have alleged, without evidence, that foreign actors manipulated the results. De la Espriella, known as "El Tigre", has portrayed himself as a supporter of US President Donald Trump and is expected to benefit from conservative voters backing other right-wing candidates.

The election reflects a regional shift towards tough-on-crime politics in Latin America. —*ANI*

PARENTS REMAIN DIVIDED

Malaysia bans social media for children under 16

KUALA LUMPUR, 1 JUNE

Malaysia on Monday began enforcing a nationwide ban preventing children under 16 from holding social media accounts, joining a growing number of countries tightening online safety protections for young users.

Under the new rules, platforms with more than 8 million users, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, must introduce age-verification systems and block under-16s from creating accounts. Existing users identified as underage will have one month to download or transfer data before restrictions take effect, while age checks will be rolled out over the next six months. Companies that fail to comply face fines of up to 10 million ringgit (£1.8 million), although parents will not be penalised if children bypass the restrictions.

The government said the measures aim to protect children from harmful content, cyberbullying and addictive platform features, while stressing that they are not intended to limit access to digital technology. Platforms must also improve user safety and act against harmful content.

Malaysia joins countries including Australia, Brazil and Indonesia in imposing age-based social media restrictions, while Britain, France, Spain, Denmark, Thailand and South Korea are considering similar measures.

Critics, however, question the effectiveness of the ban. Meta warned it could push teenagers towards less-regulated online spaces, while academics raised concerns over privacy risks linked to age verification using government identification.

Parents remain divided. Some welcomed the restrictions, citing concerns over children's mental health and excessive screen time, while others argued supervised access to social media can support learning. —*PTI*

— PTI

Rupee falls 10P to close at 94.95 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 1 JUNE

The rupee depreciated 10 paise to close at 94.95 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, amid renewed geopolitical tensions between the US and Iran and surge in crude oil prices. Forex traders said the strength of the American currency in the overseas market and Israel-Lebanon tensions also deteriorated global risk sentiments. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.93 against the US dollar, then touched an intraday high of 94.73 and a low of 95.03 during the day. Forex traders said attention has now shifted toward the upcoming Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting scheduled for 3 June to 5 June. *—PTI*

Gold falls to Rs 1.6L amid US-Iran tensions

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Gold prices declined by Rs 2,500 to Rs 1.60 lakh per 10 grams on Monday, reflecting losses in global markets amid renewed US-Iran tensions that boosted crude oil rates. According to the All India Sarafa Association, 99.9 per cent purity gold fell 1.53 per cent, from Rs 1,62,900 to Rs 1,60,400 per 10 grams. Silver also dropped Rs 5,000, nearly 2 per cent, to Rs 2,69,700 per kilogram, after settling at Rs 2,74,700 previously. Saumil Gandhi, a Senior Analyst at HDFC Securities, said that tensions between the Washignton and Tehran, rising crude prices, and a stronger American dollar have weakened gold. Internationally, spot gold declined nearly 1 per cent to USD 4,504.97 per ounce, while silver rose 1 per cent to USD 75.93.*—PTI*

India's power consumption rises 11.55% in May

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

India's power consumption increased by 11.55 per cent year-on-year to 164.98 billion units (BU) in May, driven by intense heatwave conditions, necessitating the use of cooling appliances such as air conditioners and desert coolers, according to official data. The previous year, power consumption was 147.89BU. The peak demand hit an all-time high of 270.82GW last month, up from 230.99GW in May 2025, with four consecutive days of record peaks. Notably, peak demand was on 18 May at 257.37 GW, rising to 270.82 GW on 21 May. Experts believe demand will remain steady, with the India Meteorological Department forecasting a harsh summer in 2026. *—PTI*

KIA

Kia sales up 23% as 27,586 units sold in May

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Automaker Kia India reported a 23.6 per cent year-on-year growth in sales at 27,586 units in May 2026. The company had sold 22,315 units in May 2025. It was the "highest-ever sales in May" since market entry, Kia India said in a statement on Monday. The performance reflects customer demand across Kia's product portfolio and the brand's momentum in the market, it added. "Our May sales reflect the strong alignment of our products with customer preferences," said Senior Vice-President, Sales & Marketing, Atul Sood. The demand for the new Seltos along with Sonet, Carens Clavis, Clavis EV and the MY26 Syros, helped to sustain growth, he said. *—SALAR NEWS*

No duty on 99% exports as India-Oman FTA kicks off

Textiles, engineering, gems, jewellery sectors to benefit

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

The free trade agreement (FTA) between India and Oman came into force on Monday, giving duty-free access to 99 per cent of India's exports, including textiles, engineering, gems and jewellery, to the Omani market.

The agreement also benefits professionals with enhanced mobility provisions.

Indian consumers would get cheaper Omani dates as imports of the fruit will enjoy quota-based duty concessions.

The implementation of the comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) is a key development as Indian exporters are facing difficulties in shipping goods to GCC countries Oman due to the US-Iran war.

The six Gulf nations are Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE.

India has granted duty concessions on 77.79 per cent of its total tariff lines (12,556), which covers 94.81 per cent of India's imports from Oman by value.

For products of export interest to Oman and those sensitive to India, the offer is mostly a tariff-rate quota (TRQ) based tariff liberalisation, which includes products like dates, marbles and petrochemical items.

The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) provides duty-free access for 99.38 per cent of India's exports to Oman by value, covering 98.08 per cent of Oman's tariff lines.

The first consignments availing preferential tariff benefits under the agreement, including agriculture and gems and jewellery exports from Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai, were flagged off to mark the entry into force of the deal.

The pact will enable Indian enterprises to compete on an equal footing with suppliers from other countries, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Monday.

Trade between India and Oman reached USD 11.18 billion in FY 2025-26, up from USD 10.61 billion in FY 2024-25.

He added that the agreement is expected to boost Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) by enhancing competitiveness in sectors like gems and jewellery, textiles, leather, footwear, marine products, engineering goods, processed foods and pharmaceuticals. *— PTI*

Markets fall as renewed US-Iran tensions spook traders

MUMBAI, 1 JUNE

Israel-Lebanon hostilities weighed on equity markets on Tuesday *—PTI*

Sensex and Nifty fell for the fourth straight session on Monday, driven by selling in FMCG, financial, and auto shares amid elevated crude oil prices and fresh turmoil in West Asia.

BSE Sensex dropped 508.40 points, or 0.68 per cent, to settle at 74,267.34. It hit an intraday high of 75,367.93 and a low of 74,203.68. NSE Nifty edged lower by 165.15 points, or 0.70 per cent, to end at 23,382.60.

In four days, the BSE benchmark has tumbled by 2,221.62 points, or 2.90 per cent, and the Nifty has tanked by 649.1 points, or 2.70 per cent.

Among 30 Sensex firms, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, NTPC, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Bajaj Finance were among the major laggards. Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services, InterGlobe Aviation, HCL Tech and Tata Steel were among the gainers.

"Nifty opened marginally higher but gradually came under sustained selling pressure as hopes of a near-term diplomatic breakthrough faded," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

"Recent US strikes and the escalation in cross-border hostilities between Israel and Lebanon have exerted selling pressure on equity markets, reflecting heightened geopolitical uncertainty and a shift towards risk-off sentiment," experts said.

Brent crude traded 3.34 per cent higher at USD 94.16 per barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors offloaded equities worth Rs 21,105.86 crore on Friday. *—PTI*

Industry outputs fall 4.9% in April

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

India's industrial production (IIP) growth slowed to 4.9 per cent in April 2026 from 5.7 per cent a year earlier. The IIP index rose to 118.9 from 113.1 in April 2025.

Official data has attributed the slowdown to weak energy sector growth caused by the ongoing West Asia crisis.

Notably, Mining and quarrying contracted 5.1 per cent in April, while manufacturing grew 6.2 per cent followed by electricity, gas supply and water supply, according to official data.

The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI) revised the IIP base year from 2011–12 to 2022–23. With new basket for 1,042 products across 463 groups. This is the first IIP data released in the revised base year. *—PTI*

RS 1.94 LAKH CRORE

GST collections up 3.2% in May

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections rose 3.2 per cent to over Rs 1.94 lakh crore in May on higher supplies of goods and services, as well as collection from imports, government data showed on Monday.

Gross Central GST (CGST) collection from domestic transactions during the reported month stood at Rs 37,397 crore, State GST (SGST) at Rs 45,143 crore and Integrated GST (IGST) at Rs 51,990 crore.

IGST collection from imports rose 19.1 per cent during May to Rs 59,654 crore, signalling expansion in industrial capacity. GST refunds grew 2.6 per cent to Rs 27,281 crore.

After adjusting refunds, net GST revenues in May rose 3.3 per cent to about Rs 1.67 lakh crore.

Given the increase in input costs due to supply chain issues amid global tensions, this might be the right time for the government to consider providing working capital support to industry by relaxing refund provisions with respect to input GST, which has been accumulating for many businesses, said Price Waterhouse & Co LLP partner Pratik Jain said.

"While import GST has recorded a near 20 per cent growth, this may also be attributed to rupee depreciation," KPMG Indirect Tax Head & Partner Abhishek Jain said.

GST 2.0-led rate rationalisation and simplification measures appear to be supporting consumption and demand without diluting revenues, Mahesh Jaising, Partner & Indirect Tax Leader, Deloitte India said.

The upcoming GST Council meeting must address deepened inverted duty structures, particularly refunds on input services, which continue to distort competitiveness, said Vivek Jalan, Partner, Tax Connect Advisory Services LLP. *—PTI*

Crude oil futures rebound 3% to Rs 8,536 per barrel

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Crude oil prices rebounded by over 3 per cent to Rs 8,536 per barrel in futures trade on Monday after fresh military escalation with US-Iran heightening supply disruptions concerns in West Asia. In the previous session, it had settled at Rs 8,135 per barrel.

Ending a three-day losing streak, the most-traded contract for June rose by Rs 255, or 3.08 per cent, to Rs 8,536 per barrel. The July contract also rose by Rs 225, or 2.77 per cent, to Rs 8,360 per barrel.

Oil prices rebounded as investors reassessed rising tensions between the US and Iran after Washington struck Iranian radar and drone-control sites in response to reports that Iran had downed an American drone. Iran's IRGC retaliated, and Kuwait reported intercepting missiles and drones.

Analysts said the renewed military exchanges exposed the fragility of the ceasefire and could complicate ongoing US-Iran negotiations. Traders are now closely watching whether diplomatic channels can prevent further military escalation.

Last week oil prices fell about 10 per cent amid reports that US and Iran were discussing a framework agreement that could pave the way for a longer ceasefire and eventually normalise traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. *—PTI*

UPI transactions hit record high of Rs 29.9 lakh cr in May

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

The summer travel season and IPL fever drove the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to a record high of Rs 29.90 lakh crore in transaction value and 23.2 billion in volume during May, according to the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). NPCI stated the value of transactions increased from Rs 25.14 lakh crore in May 2025 to Rs 29.03 lakh crore in April 2026, a 19 per cent rise annually.

In volume terms, May saw a new record with 23.2 billion transactions, up 24 per cent from 18.67 billion in the same period last year. In April 2026, UPI recorded 22.35 billion transactions. Akash Sinha, co-founder and CEO of Cashfree Payments, attributed May's numbers to strong organic demand, with seasonal spending and IPL boosting activity.

He noted, "UPI's average ticket size has declined from Rs 1,848 in 2021 to Rs 1,313 in 2025," which indicates a maturing ecosystem. He added that credit-on-UPI and cross-border transactions, now live in over eight countries, are expected to further propel growth. NPCI, an initiative of the RBI and Indian Banks' Association, operates India's retail payments and settlement systems, including for UPI. *—PTI*

Govt issues up to 6% OFS in NHPC Ltd at Rs 71 per share

The government has issued an Offer For Sale (ODS) in state-run hydropower major NHPC Ltd, with a base issue of 3 per cent equity and an additional 3 per cent Green Shoe Option if oversubscribed.

The floor price is Rs 71/share, the Department of Investment said on Monday.

OFS will open for non-retail investors on Tuesday and retail investors on Wednesday, according to the Department Secretary.

The NHPC OFS comes soon after the Centre completed stake sales in Coal India and LIC, as it pushes ahead with its disinvestment and asset monetisation plan for FY26.

Proceeds from the sale will go to the government's disinvestment receipts. The Centre has budgeted Rs 47,000 crore from disinvestment and asset monetization in FY26.

NHPC is a Navratna Public Sector Undertaking and is the largest hydropower firm in India. *—ANI*

INDIA'S SEAFOOD EXPORTS REACH RECORD HIGH IN 2025–26

KOCHI, 1 JUNE

India's seafood exports hit a record high in volume and value during 2025–26, reaching 19,72,018 metric tonnes worth Rs 73,890.46 crore (USD 8.46 billion), despite global challenges, said MPEDA Chairman P Jawahar.

The Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), established under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, promotes and regulates exports.

According to MPEDA, the US and China remained top importers, with frozen shrimp dominating. Frozen shrimp earned Rs 49,037.93 crore (USD 5,624.48 million), accounting for 66.52 per cent of dollar earnings. India exported 7,92,647 MT of frozen shrimp, with growth of 13.16 per cent in rupees and 8.64 per cent in dollars.

The US imported 2,56,128 MT, followed by China with 1,69,505 MT. Other key markets included the EU, Southeast Asia, Japan, and West Asia. Visakhapatnam Port, JNPT, and Kochi Port handled the most cargo during the year. *—PTI*

SoftBank to invest USD 87B in France for AI data centre

PARIS, 1 JUNE

SoftBank Group Corp has announced plans to develop and operate 5 gigawatts (GW) of artificial intelligence (AI) data centre capacity in France, with a total investment of up to Euro 75 billion (USD 87 billion).

The anouncement, of one of the biggest AI infrastructure commitments in Europe, was made during the 2026 Choose France summi

The first phase of the project includes planned data centre developments in Dunkirk (Loon-Plage), Bosquel and Bouchain in north France, with more across the country.

SoftBank said the projects will leverage France's advanced electricity grid, industrial land, engineering expertise and strong governmental support for artificial intelligence. *—ANI*

SAFETY NET FOR GIG WORKERS

Telangana bans cash wages; e-transfers must

HYDERABAD, 1 JUNE

The Telangana government, as of Monday, officially banned cash wage payments to workers, mandating electronic transfer. Bringing gig workers under the safety net of minimum wages, building an unalterable trail for labour inspectors and protecting vulnerable workgroups.

A new government order (GO) on labour governance activates the provisions of the Centre's Code on Wages, 2019, completely repealing and superseding the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, across the state.

To cut corporate red tape and ensure clarity in compliance, the notification eliminates hundreds of industry-specific schedules. The notification categorises all non-agricultural, commercial, and industrial setups into four skill categories.

The order established absolute gender neutrality, mandating perfectly uniform minimum wage rates for male, female, transgender, and physically challenged employees performing identical or equivalent work.

The notification divided workers into four categories: Unskilled, Semi-skilled, Skilled and Highly skilled for fixing minimum wages. The state has been divided into three zones: Zone 1 covers Municipal Corporations, Zone 2-Municipalities and Zone 3-Rural Areas.

In its mandate to ensure favourable working conditions for workers, the order said any task executed past standard eight-hour daily shifts, or requested on public holidays and weekly rest days, must be compensated as overtime at double the standard rate of wages.

If an industrial cluster already pays higher rates than this order's baseline, the old wages are legally exempted from the rule. Furthermore, those workers are granted an additional mandatory 10 per cent enhancement over their old wages. *—PTI*

TN factory fire temporarily halts Hyundai production

NEW DELHI, 1 JUNE

Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) on Monday said it was facing temporary production disruption after a fire broke out at a manufacturing facility of its supplier, Mobis India Ltd, at Irrungattukottai, Kancheepuram District, Tamil Nadu, on Sunday afternoon.

The affected Mobis facility supplies audio components and other automotive parts to HMIL, and the fire is expected to cause temporary production disruption. Fortunately, no fatalities have been reported, and vehicle supplies to customers remain unaffected, the filing added.

The automaker said teams from both companies are working together to assess the situation and determine the extent of the damage caused by the fire.

"This incident will result in a temporary disruption to the company's production." the firm said.

However, alternative sourcing and supply continuity measures are being actively explored to minimise the operational impact. There is sufficient inventory in our dealer network to take care of customer demand," Hyundai Motor India said. *—PTI*

Andy Flower: The architect of RCB's two truimphs

He is the best coach I have played under, says RCB captain Patidar

AHMEDABAD, 1 JUNE

Accolades have been pouring in for Virat Kohli, Rajat Patidar and Bhuvneshwar Kumar for helping Royal Challengers Bengaluru lift their second IPL title on the bounce, but another man might be having a soft chuckle of satisfaction in a quiet corner.

Andy Flower — the silent revolutionary who transformed RCB from history-seekers to history-makers.

When he took over the reins in August 2023, RCB were still searching for their first IPL title, leaving them a target for merciless social media trolls.

Flower, who joined the Bengaluru side in 2023, came with proven multi-level credentials, having guided England to the Ashes in 2005, a Test series win in India (2012) and the 2010 T20 World Cup. Once he took over from Mike Hesson, Flower's concentration was to fortify RCB's bowling, yet, the signing of Bhuvneshwar Kumar ahead of IPL 2025 for Rs 10.75 crore raised a lot of eyebrows.

But it proved a master-stroke as the veteran pacer amassed 45 wickets across two IPL seasons, leading RCB's bowling unit with aplomb.

RCB Head Coach Andy Flower, Virat Kohli and Director of Cricket Mo Babat with the trophy after winning IPL 2026, in Ahmedabad on Sunday —PTI

Flower, a known supporter of young talents, worked along with mentor Dinesh Karthik, Director of Cricket Mo Bobat and a slew of scouts to rope in some young bowlers like Rasikh Salam Dhar, Suyash Sharma, Abhinandan Singh and Mangesh Yadav.

Skipper Patidar stressed on Flower's ability to work effectively with seasoned stars and upcoming talents. "I can say I have played for four years in the IPL. He is one of the best coaches, I feel, because of the way he handles players.

"Not only players who are playing, but the players who are not playing, the new players in the team, those are playing their first IPL season, he spends a lot of time with every individual. I don't have enough words for him, but he is the best coach I have played under," gushed Patidar.

The 33-year-old offered the example of Rasikh Dhar to underline his argument. "When we gave a chance to Dhar, he looked confident. He is very much confident about his skills, about his slower balls, back of the hands and yorkers. I think he supported Bhuvi and Josh in IPL 2026 well. Whenever I see him, he has clarity about his role," he said.

"Definitely, I think the culture has changed. There have been a lot of changes in the mindset of the players. I think all the credit goes to the coaching staff because of the way they are handling the players.

The cultural change under Flower is visible now. For years, RCB have experimented with coaches who can give them that elusive title. When they found the right one, he brought it twice in a row to RCB headquarters in Bengaluru. —PTI

WE ASKED IF WE CAN GO BACK TO BACK: KOHLI ON WIN

For someone who has carried the weight of expectations season after season, Virat Kohli on Sunday acknowledged the current RCB outfit doesn't expect him to step up every time with multiple match-winner in its ranks.

Kohli stood tall with an unbeaten 75 after RCB bowlers set up their five-wicket win in the final of the Indian Premier League against Gujarat Titans here. Having clinched their maiden title win in the 18th year of the IPL, Kohli and RCB sealed a second consecutive victory on Sunday for their second title.

We just asked ourselves if we can go back to back and here we are, he said. —PTI

WE DOMINATED THIS YEAR: RCB SKIPPER PATIDAR

Royal Challengers Bengaluru's second IPL title win came on Rajat Patidar's 33rd birthday but more than that happy coincidence the skipper was pleased with his team's start-to-end domination in the league. RCB were an unstoppable force from the opening match where they decimated Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium. That bull run reached its logical conclusion at the Narendra Modi Stadium with a five-wicket win over Gujarat Titans in the IPL final on Sunday. "To be honest, last year was a lot of pressure. This year was more calm because of the way we played throughout the tournament. I think we have not just played, we dominated this year," said Patidar in the post-match press conference. —PTI

GT TEAM BUS CATCHES FIRE POST FINALE

The Gujarat Titans escaped a major scare when their team bus suffered a short circuit, as the team were returning to their hotel after the match on Sunday. No one was injured in the incident as all players and staff were successfully evacuated.

THE RISE OF SURYA

In his first full season in IPL, 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi won hearts. He made 776 runs this season at a remarkable strike rate of 273.31. He also hit 63 fours and 72 sixes, breaking Chris Gayle's record of 59 sixes. This record was unbroken for 14 years. Here, Vaibhav is seen posing with the many awards he won on Sunday. He won Rs 55 lakh prize and an SUV, the Orange Cap, awarded to the highest run-scorer, brought him Rs 10 lakh. He also bagged the Most Valuable Player award, worth Rs 15 lakh.

French Open fines Vallejo over sexist umpire remarks

PARIS, 1 JUNE

Adolfo Daniel Vallejo was fined half his French Open prize money after he said his second-round match should not have been umpired by a woman, the tournament director announced on Monday.

Vallejo lost to French teenager Moise Kouame last week after a tense five-set battle that lasted nearly five hours. He later told the tennis website Clay that "this sort of match needs to be umpired by a man."

Following his 6-3, 7-5, 3-6, 2-6, 7-6 (8) loss, Vallejo added: "It's very difficult for a woman to do it."

Roland Garros director Amelie Mauresmo told reporters at the French Open that a 65,000 euros ($76,000) fine was handed down to the player, "representing roughly half of his prize money."

"This is clearly unacceptable," Mauresmo said.

Players reaching the second round at the French Open receive 130,000 euros.

Vallejo, from Paraguay, said the umpire, Ana Carvalho from Brazil, did not control the spectators.

"It has to be refereed by a man, because it's a very demanding crowd and you need a lot of strength to go against the crowd," he said. "The crowd was very out of line, but I understand they're supporting their compatriot. It's quite an intense crowd and that's why I was prepared; I already knew it would be like that and, to be honest, it didn't harm me, but rather strengthened him." —PTI

WTT PRISTINA FEEDER SERIES

Divyanshi's double gold makes history

PRISTINA, 1 JUNE

15-year-old Divyanshi Bhowmick produced a dream performance to become the youngest Indian woman ever to win a WTT Feeder Women's Singles title here.

The young star, ranked World No. 211, showcased extraordinary composure and fighting spirit to defeat Chinese Taipei's Yeh Yi-Tian, the World No. 38, in a thrilling five-game final.

After dropping the opening game, Divyanshi mounted a spirited comeback to register a memorable 3-2 (8-11, 11-8, 11-5, 7-11, 11-7) victory, announcing her arrival on the senior international stage in emphatic fashion.

The victory is not only historic for Indian table tennis but also places Divyanshi in elite company globally. At just 15, she is believed to be the second-youngest player in the world, after Japan's prodigious Miwa Harimoto, to capture a Women's Singles title on the WTT Feeder circuit.

Divyanshi's triumph was the

culmination of a remarkable week in Prishtina, where she overcame higher-ranked and more experienced opponents.

Adding further sparkle to an already unforgettable campaign, Divyanshi also clinched the Women's Doubles gold medal alongside fellow Indian teenager Syndrela Das.

The talented Indian pair defeated the Japanese combination of Sachi Aoki and Cocona Muramatsu in a pulsating final. After losing the opening game, the Indians fought back brilliantly to prevail 3-2 (7-11, 14-12, 12-14, 11-8, 11-7) in a contest lasting a little over 30 minutes. —PTI

Indian quartet endures miserable day

OSLO, 1 JUNE

The Indian contingent endured a miserable outing as all four players suffered defeats in Round 6, with world champion D Gukesh slipping back to losing ways after showing encouraging signs in the previous round, while R Praggnanandhaa, Divya Deshmukh and Koneru Humpy also ended on the wrong side of the results in Norway Chess here.

In contrast, defending champion and world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen continued his resurgence, securing a classical victory to thrust himself firmly back into title contention.

The Norwegian, who had looked surprisingly vulnerable in the opening rounds, is suddenly gathering momentum at just the right time.

Yet Carlsen's resurgence has been overshadowed by an unexpected frontrunner. Wesley So of the United States emerged as the sole leader with four rounds remaining after dislodging Alireza Firouzja from the top, while both Carlsen and Vincent Keymer - the tournament's early strugglers - have launched spirited comeback bids after disastrous starts.

So surged into sole lead on 11.5 points after defeating

(L-R) D Gukesh, R Praggnanandhaa, Koneru Humpy and Divya Deshmukh –x

Praggnanandhaa in a classical game and collecting the full three points, leaving the Indian stranded at the bottom of the six-player standings on six points.

For second successive game, Praggnanandhaa appeared to be on course to hold, and at times even looked capable of turning the tables, but So demonstrated his endgame mastery.

Gukesh was under severe time pressure, a fact that Keymer acknowledged after the game. However, Gukesh struck a note of defiance after the match, insisting that with four rounds still to go, he remained hopeful of staging a serious comeback.

Indian women also lose

World Cup winner Divya Deshmukh (8.5 points) relinquished her grip on the top spot after a classical defeat to China's five-time world champion Ju Wenjun (8 points), slipping to second place but remaining well within striking distance of leader Bibisara Assaubayeva (9.5 points).

The Kazakh player edged further ahead after outlasting Koneru Humpy (5.5 points) in the Armageddon tie-break, following a hard-fought draw in classical play.

For Humpy, it has been a frustrating campaign, as she finds herself rooted at the bottom of the standings. —PTI

NEW RULES KICK IN

ICC to allow pink ball on trial basis in Tests hit by bad light

AHMEDABAD, 1 JUNE

The usage of pink balls on trial basis during Test matches in case bad light affects play and allowing head coaches inside field of play during drinks break are some of major changes in playing conditions approved by ICC board at its annual meeting here.

The two-day meeting was held in Ahmedabad, where the board of directors also delegated top ICC officials to oversee the Bangladesh Cricket Board elections.

It is understood that the match will start with red ball but if there is bad light, then floodlights could be on and pink ball will be used to make up for the overs that could otherwise be lost.

How will the rule work?

In a day, 90 overs are bowled and suppose after 75 overs of traditional red ball cricket, light fades with 15 overs still to bowl, that part can be covered by using pink ball under floodlights only if the two teams have agreement prior to the series.

The ICC Board also approved "undertaking research on lighting technology for match officials and venues to reduce lost play due to poor light, with ICC co-funding R&D projects alongside Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC)."

Coaches allowed in field of play during drinks intervals

Just like T20s have strategic

time outs where coaches and support staff enter field of play to discuss tactics, the same would be applied in Test matches from now on.

"Updates to the Playing Conditions to allow head coaches or their designees to consult with teams during scheduled drinks intervals, mandate 15-minute intervals in T20I matches, and require batters to be ready at the resumption of play."

To keep a check on illegal bowling action, on-field umpires will have an access to Hawk Eye Data.

Women's Cricket

The ICC Board approved a change to the window for the ICC Women's Champions Trophy 2027, moving the tournament from June-July to 14–28 February 2027. —PTI

CRICKET CANADA SUSPENDED

The ICC Board resolved to suspend Cricket Canada from ICC membership with immediate effect due to serious breaches of its membership obligations. Despite the suspension, Canada's national teams will remain eligible for ICC events. Cricket Canada will continue to receive ICC funding through a controlled mechanism overseen by ICC management and limited to approved national team programmes. The ICC has outlined reinstatement conditions to address governance and administrative issues, with progress to be monitored by the ICC Normalisation Committee. The ICC will also provide Cricket Canada with a set of reinstatement conditions aimed at addressing the governance and administrative issues identified by the Board. The progress will be monitored by the ICC Normalisation Committee, supported by ICC management, with reinstatement of membership subject to the Board being satisfied that the conditions have been fully met. —ANI